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MEMOIRS

OF

MRS. INCHBALD:

INCLUDING HER

FAMILIAR CORRESPONDENCE

WITH

THE MOST DISTINGUISHED PERSONS OF HER TIME.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

THE MASSACRE,

AND

A CASE OF CONSCIENCE;

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED FROM HER AUTOGRAPH COPIES.

EDITED BY

JAMES BOADEN, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,
(SUCCESSOR TO HENRY COLBURN.)
1833.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Biography has been prepared from MRS. INCHBALD'S Autograph Journals, kept regularly for a period of fifty years, and from at least two hundred of her own letters, written unreservedly to her dearest friends. In addition to these valuable materials, the letters of some of the most distinguished characters of her day, with whom MRS. INCHBALD was in habits of intimacy, are interspersed throughout the narrative. These are also now first printed from the originals in the possession of Mrs. Phillips, her executrix.

May, 1833.

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CORRIGENDUM.

The first sheet had unluckily gone to press before the author decided to expel the first personal pronoun from his Narrative. If *I* should by chance occur after the first chapter, *We* shall be happy to see *ourselves* in his place, by the help of the reader's pen.

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MEMOIR

OF

MRS. INCHBALD.

CHAPTER I.

Importance of Biography fairly given—Memoirs written by Mrs. Inchbald, and destroyed; by whose advice—Her birth—Letter from the Duchess of Norfolk—The family of Simpson—Their connexions—Instruction domestic—Early desire to see the world—Impediment in her speech—Thinks of the Stage as a profession—Applies to Richard Griffith, manager of the Norwich theatre—His answer—Her girlish fondness—His harmonious name—Her brother, George Simpson, becomes an actor—Bury Fair—In 1771 pays a visit to her sister in London—Mr. Inchbald an early admirer—Reply to proposals from him—Standingfield—Griffith—Steals his picture—Quits home in April, 1772, leaving behind a letter to her mother—The letter itself.

It has been frequently and truly said, that the humblest life contains in it matter of instruction, if the record were simply and fairly given. But the hopes of such narratives are commonly disappointed; because the autobiographer is too vain

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or too timid to write the truth; and the admirer or friend who may undertake the task, leaves his subject both magnified and obscured by the mist of panegyric. If the case should occur that a person constantly wrote down the impressions of the day, and preserved with such diary the communications of friends by letter, the materials so presented, if fairly used, seem to supply the great desideratum in biography,—a life recorded without vanity, and free from the ostentation of literary powers.

The late Mrs. Inchbald was a character of the express nature and habits above assumed. She was indefatigable in the registry of events; she preserved a great mass of her correspondence; nor has she disdained to record the arts of frugality, and the sacrifices of comfort to principle, by which not only independence was achieved, but along with it the power to administer, even largely, to the necessities of others. Her papers have been put into my hands; and after having diligently perused them, I determined to use my best efforts to exhibit her as she really was, in all the variety of a singular but interesting life, at once domestic, theatrical, and literary.

Before I enter upon this narrative, it will be proper to explain to the reader what I have discovered as to the "Memoirs written by herself," and which produced a well-remembered competition between the publishers of her day, among whom Mr. Robinson and Mr. Phillips are mentioned by

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herself. They offered her one thousand pounds, even without perusing her MS. for her four volumes in twelves, containing her life brought down to the period of her establishment in town. She fluctuated much in her determination as to making this production public. Her intimate friends were aware of this indecision, and gave their advice, as may be supposed, with different degrees of sincerity. But she delayed the appearance of the book, from a reluctance to give pain, and finally destroyed the work, on conscientious principles, by the advice of Dr. Poynter, as I learn from the following memorandum in her firmest handwriting:

"Query—'What I should wish *done* at the point of death?'

"Dr. P. 'Do it NOW.'——4 volumes destroyed."

I thus guard against any attempt hereafter to offer, as hers, a pretended autobiography, which cannot, the reader sees, really exist; and having already stated the perfect authenticity of the papers before me, prepare to supply at least a body of *facts* and *opinions* certainly written by herself, and the materials of that work which her tenderness suppressed; not, however, allowing any vestige of angry or contemptuous feeling to appear, unless sanctioned by the decision of time.

Mrs. Inchbald was born on the 15th of October, 1753, at Standingfield, near Bury St. Edmunds, in

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Suffolk; one of the numerous offspring of John and Mary Simpson. The maiden name of her mother was Rushbrook; she was the daughter of William Rushbrook of Flimpton. The Simpsons held a moderate farm in Standingfield; were Catholics, and greatly esteemed by the gentry of the neighbourhood. To show this sufficiently, it may be proper to present a letter which was received by Mrs. Inchbald's mother from Mary, Duchess of Norfolk, the wife of Edward, the ninth duke. It relates to the death of Mrs. Simpson's daughter-in-law, and is highly honourable to the noble writer, as well as to the family whom she so benevolently addresses. The date of the letter, though omitted by her Grace, is ascertained, by the subject of it, to be the 28th of June, 1762:—

"I am extremely concerned to be the conveyer of the most melancholy tidings to you that a tender parent can hear. Though a stranger to you, I undertake the hard task; as Mr. Simpson is, by his real concern, unable to perform the sad office himself. His care and constant attention and affection for his wife do not end with her life, which she finished this morning about two o'clock. She had decayed so gradually, that she left this world without a groan or sign of suffering. No care that could be had of a person in her condition had been wanting to her, from the time she came into this country; and I think it has been the means of her con-

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tinuing so many months alive, contrary to the expectations of all her physicians. I must add that, whenever I have conversed with her, she has always expressed the greatest respect and affectionate duty and tenderness towards you that a child could possibly do; and I am persuaded died in those sentiments, which Mr. Simpson has desired I would assure you of, as well as of his respect to you, and eternal regard to her memory.

" Your humble servant,

(Signed) " M. NORFOLK."

Mrs. Inchbald's father died on the 15th April, 1761. Such a loss could not but be severely felt in a numerous family; but the widow seems to have struggled through all difficulties, and to have brought up her children in great respectability. The beauty of the girls was much celebrated in the circle of their acquaintance, and particularly that of Elizabeth; but the charms of her person, that might have been expected to lead her into society, were long counteracted by a defect which drove her into solitude. She had an imperfection in her utterance, which for a long time rendered her speech indistinct, and intelligible only to those who had become skilful interpreters. In this melancholy state, letters stepped in to her aid, and that passion was conceived to which she owed her best recreation, her

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constant resource, her affluence, and her fame. I learn from herself that her education was domestic; and she remarks, as to her proficiency—"it is astonishing how much all girls are inclined to literature, to what boys are. My brother went to school seven years, and never could spell. I and two of my sisters, though we never were taught, could spell from our infancy."

It is a singular feature in her character that, though she shunned company, she longed to see the world. The Metropolis, in fact, became her passion; and she very early indeed determined that to London she would bend her course, or wing her flight, as facility or opposition should determine her. Nor did the fruition of her wishes ever extinguish the preference she felt for the Capital. To the last she could hardly bear to live out of it.

At Standingfield she felt the youthful desire of Arviragus; and, if the play was within her reach, most probably used his very language to her alarmed and cautious parent:

> "What should we speak of,
> When we are old as you? When we shall hear
> The rain and wind beat dark December—How,
> In this our pinching cave, shall we discourse
> The freezing hours away?—We have *seen* nothing."

To the prudent representations of the danger of such a course, and a recital of the miseries which would lead her to know the value of her present

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state, her keen and vigorous mind would reply with Rasselas—"You have given me now something to desire; I shall long to see the miseries of the world, since the sight of them is necessary to happiness." Indeed, so absorbed was she in this passion, that, in her thirteenth year, she frequently declared "she would rather die, than live any longer without seeing the world." In pursuit of the end, she did not altogether overlook the means; but here was the same singularity as before—her impediment, which drove her from company, seemed no bar to her becoming an actress. She might consider the beauty of her person as securing *attention* at least to her efforts; and she found out, by repeated trials, modes of palliating her defect. She wrote out all the words with which she had much difficulty; carried them constantly about her; and moreover discovered, that stage declamation, being a raised and artificial thing, afforded more time for enunciation; and that it is, for the most part, the eagerness and hurry of conversation that, in the stammerer, provoke the desire, and obstruct the performance. She appears to have determined not only to see the great world, but to be an actress, if she could by any influence procure an engagement.

We must not be surprised to find her best friends averse to both end and means; and earnest in their expostulations and entreaties that, for such wild notions, she would neither go *upon*

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the stage nor *into* one. But here, as in most dealings with the human will, its stubborn bent is fixed by the opposition, and the Heroine silently decided upon her course.

In the early part of 1770, she was living at Standingfield with her mother, her sister Deborah, and her brother George. Her sisters, Anne and Dorothy, were married to Mr. John and Mr. James Hunt; another sister to Mr. Huggins, and another to Mr. Slender. Her brother Edward had not migrated, but lived near home with his wife; and frequent calls and regular visits were interchanged between them. The family were in weekly correspondence with the sisters settled in London; and these claims and the more rigid demands of the farm, secured them from the danger of idleness. It was at this period that Miss Simpson applied herself to Mr. Richard Griffith, manager of the Norwich Theatre, and at once asked for an engagement; enjoining him to secrecy as to her design of quitting home. The following is his reply:

"Tuesday afternoon (no date).

"MADAM,

"I was just now favoured with yours—the purpose of which, depend upon it, shall be an entire secret. From some treaties which I have now depending with different performers, and some proposals given under my hand, until I have received answers to them, I cannot yet say it is in

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my power, as much as it is in my inclination to oblige you: if it should, be assured I shall be happy to do it. When you come to town, I should be glad to see and speak with you on this subject. In the mean time I am, Madam,

"Your very humble servant,

"RICHARD GRIFFITH."

The correspondence seems to have continued so entirely to the satisfaction of the fair applicant, and Mr. Griffith to have obtained so firm a place in her youthful bosom, that at the end of her year's pocket-book, we find in detached printed characters the following words—

R.I.C.H.A.R.D G.R.I.F.F.I.T.H.—

"Each dear letter of thy name is harmony."

I confess the harmony of these letters, even as they combine into syllables, is not very apparent to my ears; in *Wales* it is possible the sounds may be delightfully harmonious, independently I mean of their announcing a being so fascinating as the *manager* of a Theatre, while friendly, is usually considered. I will not conceal my suspicion that our Rosalind had a strong juvenile passion for this gentleman, who probably might be the hero of the Norwich company, as well as the manager. She never, in a series of years, receives his visits with indifference.

The term used by Miss Simpson, of "seeing the

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world," must not lead the reader to suppose Standingfield a hermitage. The family had a very large circle of visitors, and her own pocket-book exhibits the names of at least a hundred persons who called upon them, among whom were the principal families of the neighbourhood. Part of this popularity may be fairly attributed to their good character and circumstances—part to their religion, which, among a sect like the Roman Catholics in a Protestant kingdom, was sure to bind those in cordiality, who were zealous in the same faith. Bury contributed much to their comfort and amusement—it was their post-town, and their fair; they had their letters from it daily, and there was probably contracted that intimacy with a host of players, that first drew her brother into the profession, and afterwards Miss Simpson herself. When all this is considered, "to see the world," means no more than to change the mode and scene of existence; or indulge in the rustic delusion, that paints the Capital as the emporium of all that is desirable—the abode of wealth, and taste, and elegance, where beauty would be sure of valuable admiration, and talents grasped at by intelligence, and fostered by munificence.

Among the amusements of the family, *reading* seems to have been a constant resource, and we find the readings were commonly dramatic. Brother George went occasionally to Norwich, and on his return brought, no doubt, much of the

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theatrical declamation, to give spirit to his own efforts to amuse them. In the month of April, 1770, George became an actor, and quitted home; he corresponded affectionately and regularly with the family, and thus kept up the desire of his sister to secure a similar independence. She now wrote out the parts of Hermione, Cordelia, and other characters, for which she judged that she had requisites; and appears to have so subdued her impediment as to render it tractable at least, if not removable. The good lady, her mother, does not seem averse to theatres, or players by profession; for in the October of the present year she accompanied her daughters, Elizabeth and Deborah, to Bury, where they remained on a visit at their cousin Willis's, and constantly attended the stage rehearsals in the morning, and the performances in the evening. Among their associates at Bury, the following, I believe, were all upon the stage—Mr. Wilson, Mr. Chalmers, Miss Yarnham, Miss Sharp, Miss J. Josenall. Mr. Wilson was even *particularly* attentive to our heroine, as will appear with credit to him in the sequel, and show him, at least in her case, to have been a steady and reasonable admirer. On her return home, she accepted a keepsake in remembrance; and he sent her, a welcome present, a few books. A correspondence ensued between them. On the 24th of January, 1771, her brother,

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in a letter to their mother, announced his marriage. Miss Simpson seems to have been a ready writer, though by no means a mistress of the *pen*. There obviously was then no such system as we see obtaining at present, and which gives to modern ladies a hand-writing so exactly similar, that I have seen repeatedly twenty notes which nothing but the signatures could determine to be from different persons. As far as the eye is gratified by neatness, the penmanship is improved; but we have lost the indication of character, which existed when the *writing*, like the walk, the various action, the manner of doing every thing, was individual and peculiar; and to a very nice observer sometimes made the letter itself a refutation of its contents.

Whoever has read any of the numerous sketches of Mrs. Inchbald's life, will have been apprised of her coming to town in her *sixteenth* year, and, a perfect stranger to London, plunging into either ludicrous or painful embarrassments, as though she knew of no friend or relative in the Capital; and was in the greatest danger of becoming a prey to the desperate and wicked of either our sex or her own. She is already *eighteen*, and I have said nothing of her running away to this mart of all that is good or evil:—but I have quietly to relate, from her own memorandums, that, on the 7th of May, 1771, she came to Lon-

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don on a visit to her sister Hunt. There she daily saw her other sisters; and Mr. Inchbald, her future husband, who passed a great part of every day in her company. She wrote regularly to her mother; visited the Museum and the principal sights of the metropolis; and the party she was with usually spent the evening, either at one of the theatres, or some public gardens. Her principal associates, besides her relations, were Mr. West and Mr. Pitt, friends of Mr. Inchbald's and her own, Mr. and Miss West and Mrs. F. Hunt. She frequently mentions Master Inchbald and George Inchbald's return to town. On the 19th of May she went with Miss West to the Foundling, and on the 21st was at High Mass. It is very obvious, that the connexion with Mr. Inchbald awaited only convenience; there was a very unreserved communication, on his part, of his previous attachments and difficulties resulting from them. She still meditated an engagement in the Norwich Company; and took her sister Slender with her—at all events a prudent measure, when she sought an interview with a gentleman so *harmoniously* accomplished. Mr. Inchbald had an engagement at Birmingham, and was obliged to suspend the personal intercourse with the beautiful woman, who had entire possession of his affections. On the 1st of June they formed a party for Vauxhall; and, as prudent people did in

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those days, quitted the more expensive supper of the gardens, for one at a tavern in the neighbourhood. This was a parting entertainment: he took his leave of her, and set out for Birmingham. She stayed herself only two days longer in town, and on the 4th was on her way to Standingfield.

Mr. Inchbald now sent a letter addressed to her mother and herself, which they answered on the 16th and 17th; and the correspondence is continued through the summer and autumn of 1771. The young lady does not seem at all disposed to precipitation, and seriously weighs the loss of a thousand gratifications which an early union cuts off, besides the chances of a rash or unsuitable or improvident connexion. Mr. Inchbald for a time ceased to write to her. At length, before she quitted Standingfield, he wrote once more seriously to her; and her reply, which is excessively girlish, and containing nothing of the point and precision of her subsequent style, shall be here inserted, though a little in advance of its proper date and place.

MRS. INCHBALD'S LETTER TO MR. INCHBALD, BEFORE SHE LEFT STANDINGFIELD.

"You see, Mr. Inchbald, I have complied with your request, by answering your letter imme-

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diately. Indeed, I was not a little disturbed at first sight of it, with wondering what new correspondent I had got; for as so many things of consequence had occurred since I saw the hand, it had really slipt my remembrance. You inquire, whether the pleasures of Bury fair are not worn off? I must confess they are not; for although, like all others, they were intermixed with pains which at the time of enjoyment robbed 'em of the power of bestowing happiness, yet the recollection of 'em can [bestow it]: 'tis sweet, and not to be rivalled by any other, unless the delights of London; but they for some time have daily grown the weakest, which can easily be accounted for; for as that impression was first made, 'tis natural it will be first erased. I find you have seen my thoughts on marriage; but, as you desire it, I will repeat them. In spite of your eloquent pen, matrimony still appears to me with less charms than terrors: the bliss arising from it, I doubt not, is superior to any other—but best not to be ventured for (in my opinion), till some little time have proved the emptiness of all other; which it seldom fails to do. But to enter into marriage with the least reluctance, as fearing you are going to sacrifice part of your time, must be greatly imprudent: fewer unhappy matches I think would be occasioned, if fewer persons were guilty of this indiscretion,—an indiscretion that shocks me, and which I hope

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Heaven will ever preserve me from; as must be your wish, if the regard that you have professed for me be really mine, which I am not wholly undeserving of; for, as much as the strongest friendship can allow, I am, yours,

"E. SIMPSON."

There appears no chance of loneliness in the country retirement of a family so numerous as the Simpsons; besides, on the 14th of the month they paid their annual visit to Bury Fair; that is, they went to their Cousin Willis's, and staid till the 18th, enjoying the delights of the fair, morning rehearsals, and the usual performances at the theatre. On the 15th Mrs. Inchbald spoke to Mr. Griffith for the first time, and is disappointed that he did not meet her at Mr. Chambers's:

> "These are the charming agonies of love,
> Whose misery delights."

On the 25th she went to see her brother George and his wife perform for the first time, and returned home on the 31st, having passed the two preceding days at Bury. From this time "edging," as Shakspeare says, "towards her purpose," she carries on a clandestine correspondence with her brother George and her sister Hunt, and in December ingenuously confesses herself unhappy, and *very* unhappy.

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Their friends Sir Thomas and Lady Gage rather slacken their visits; and so she fancies do the Parkers and the Talbots. Mr. Burchell, of philosophic memory, would merely smile at the next three notices in her pocket-book:

"1772. Jan. 22nd. Saw Mr. Griffith's picture.
28th. Stole it.
29th. Rather disappointed at not receiving a letter from Mr. Inchbald."

On the 11th February her brother George came in, which disappointed her as to the scheme she was now about to carry into execution; he went away again on the 12th, and on the 23rd she wrote a line to Miss Sumpter in furtherance of her scheme. On the 26th she went to Bury, which excited no alarm, and, unknown to any one, set off for Norwich, where she arrived by seven in the evening—had an interview with Mr. Griffith, and at twelve set out for Bury again. On the 4th of March she wrote to Mr. Griffith, and on the 20th received a letter from him, which, in her own language, "almost distracted her." On the 22nd she concluded on a new adventure. On the 26th she wrote two letters to Mr. Griffith as from a Mr. Royal; the object of them we must leave to conjecture. On the 10th of April she packed up her things, and wrote a farewell letter to her mother. Its insertion in this place may properly close the first chapter.

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THE LETTER TO HER MOTHER, WHICH MRS. INCHBALD LEFT ON HER TABLE WHEN SHE QUITTED STANDINGFIELD.

"By the time you receive this I shall have left Standingfield, and perhaps for ever. You are surprised, but be not uneasy:—believe the step I have taken, however indiscreet, is no ways criminal; unless I sin by not acquainting you with it, which was impossible for me to do, though strongly pressed by the desire of giving you a personal farewell. I now endure every pang—one not lost to all feeling must—on thus quitting the tenderest and best of parents; I would say most beloved too, but cannot *prove* my affection;—yet time may;—to *that* I must submit my hope of regaining your regard.

"The censure of the world I despise; as the most worthy incur the reproaches of *that*. Should I ever think you wish to hear from me, I will write."

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CHAPTER II.

Juvenile indiscretions—Her secret arrival in London—Adventures —Two Inns—Reddish—King—Her brother Slender meets her— Writes at length to her sister—Dodd and his impudence—Gets into hot water—Mr. Inchbald counsels her, and marries her in June, 1772, by the Catholic and Protestant rites—Leave London together for Bristol—Begins her studies professionally—Cordelia —Garrick on Shakspeare—Stolen from the French—Becomes acquainted with Mrs. Hartley—First appearance on the Stage— Parallel lives of Centlivre and Inchbald.

It is difficult in treating of juvenile indiscretion, to speak of such instances as not only seem borne out by the subsequent conduct, but give that direction, and inspire those powers which lead the person to his peculiar good; to distinction, to affluence, to perhaps lasting fame. There is a danger lest an inference should be drawn that tends to fatalism, and the train of evils that result from supposing the suggestions of our inexperience the *heralds* only of our just and assigned course. Had Shakspeare not fled from Stratford and his home, he had probably been a glover like his father, never trod the stage as his own Adam, nor written those immortal dramas that returned

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him to the Avon with wealth and honour, and rendered him the glory of his country. The same inference may be drawn from the progress and humbler success of Mrs. Inchbald.

But youth should be early admonished to look to the general consequences of indiscretion, rather than the partial exceptions that the world offers; and by no means mistake a happy result for the moral sanction of irregular and indiscreet desires. They should remember the argument of the philosopher, when he was shown the pictures of such as had *escaped* from storms at sea:—"I see the portraits of those who were saved; but where are the likenesses of the shipwrecked—those who perished in the ocean?"* In the case of Mrs. Inchbald too, it may be remarked, that had she possessed less power of mind, so as to have remitted in her painful studies, and indulged herself, rather than nourished others, she would have missed the applause of the public, and never approached the elevated society which thought itself honoured by her talents and her virtues.

We now proceed in the narrative. In her memorandum she says—"On the 11th of April, early in the morning, with much fear and difficulty, I left my mother's house unknown to any one, came to London in the Norwich Fly, and got lodgings

* "Ita fit: illi enim nusquam picti sunt, qui naufragia fecerunt, in marique perierunt."—CICERO, DE NATURA DEOR. L. III. § 37.

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at the Rose and Crown in St. John's Street." It is difficult to see her object with any distinctness. The mere girlish fancy of seeing the world could hardly be indulged, because she would herself be seen—an object of great alarm to her. "On the 12th, in the morning, I went to Charing Cross." This was for the purpose of calling upon a distant connexion, whom she understood to live opposite Northumberland House; but to her infinite chagrin, she found her friends had quitted business, and retired from London, altogether into Wales. She was thus disappointed of her protector and assured asylum; and her mind became startled, confused, and wretched. She fancied once that she saw Mr. Pitt, whom the reader will remember as one of Mr. Inchbald's friends. In the afternoon she took a short walk, and in the evening a very long one to Covent Garden: she now dreaded the meeting with any relation, and once fancied that she saw her brother and sister Slender, and her sister D. Hunt. On the 13th she did not venture out till the evening, when she called on Mr. Reddish, and from him went to Mr. King's; and, as she says, expected a call from him on the following morning at her lodgings; but he did not come. She now began to dread she knew not what; to suspect the very courtesy of her landlady; and her mind, impregnated with the terrors so *happily* laid in the way of youth by our novelists, she imagined every lusty motherly-looking

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woman to be a Sinclair planning her destruction; and fancied that Mr. King, from the lodging when he saw it, had determined to give himself no farther trouble about her.

> " A thousand fantasies began to throng
> Into her memory;"

and in the afternoon she left her lodgings and got others, after many strange adventures, at the White Swan on Holborn Bridge. What these were she does not register in her diary, and we therefore cannot rely upon the highly fanciful tale which was dressed up by the Magazines; totally indeed at variance with the knowledge of London which she had previously acquired. It would not be safe to desert the actual stepping-stones which she herself has marked down to enable us to track her progress. We will not however suppress, in this instance, some particulars which she certainly had seen, as they were published under the direction of a person who was known to her. Though the old discoverer *time* shows their inaccuracy one way, there may be something like the facts in the adventures themselves, which certainly justify her own epithet of *strange*. The reader will remark that, instead however of occurring on the night of her arrival, they did not happen till two days afterwards.

This statement makes her get into a hackney-coach upon getting out of the Diligence, and drive

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to the relations opposite Northumberland House. Finding that they had retired to Wales, she requests permission to remain with the present inhabitants of the house till she could consider where to go for the remainder of the night. The people, as it should seem, from pure humanity, promise that she shall remain there safely the whole of the night. But the terrors of London tricks now rise too strong for confidence, and suddenly snatching up her bandbox, she rushes out of the house, leaving the volunteer kindness to wonder at, rather than pity, such wild and unreasonable conduct.

The expedient that strikes her is to sink the country girl, and ask for a day or two's accommodation at the first *lodging-house* she could find. A bill soon caught her eye, and she boldly entered, late as it was, in the assumed character of a milliner's apprentice, whose mistress had occasion for her *bed*, on the arrival of some unexpected visitors from the country. The people, to whom she was telling this fine story, of course did not credit it; and upon turning round her head, she saw the very man whom she had flown from so precipitately;—he had followed her, from curiosity, to see what she really would do with herself. She now meditated another flight, in her shame at detection, but the door was locked upon her, and a constable threatened; when a boy of twelve years old, upon seeing her tears, began to cry

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himself; and told his mother that "he would never go to school again, if she did not let the young lady go without being consigned over to the constable."

She accordingly wanders about till the clock strikes two, and then finds herself at Holborn Bridge, and a coach, that she heard was full, just setting off for York. Pretending therefore to be a disappointed passenger, she obtains a lodging, under strong suspicion; and, at the top of the house, is locked into a bedchamber, by her hostess of the White Swan, Holborn Bridge. Here, with very little money, she exists upon a roll or two, and a draught of water from the jug in her apartment, and walks out in the day time, to pretended dinners, with friends whom she did not hitherto choose to visit. Ten days are so said to pass away; when she really quitted the White Swan for her sister's, as appears by her own minutes above.

In the morning of the 15th, she again visited Mr. King on the subject of a stage engagement, and received some hope from his assistance to accomplish her plan. She now saw the impossibility of maintaining any longer reserve with her relations; and during the rest of the day shut herself in her chamber, and began a letter to her sister, D. Hunt, which she finished on the following day;—drank tea below with the people of the house, took her letter, for fear of accidents, herself

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to the post, and in the evening read the Grecian Daughter. The 17th was entirely devoted to her books. She read, with a view to her profession, 'Othello' and 'The Wonder,' for Desdemona and Violante; and gave them, for a farce, 'The Devil to Pay,' in which her youthful hopes might anticipate the full tide of popular enjoyment which flowed perhaps only with *Jordan's* Nell. A Magazine diversified these labours. She continued her dramatic studies on the 18th with the Tempest, and her glass did not flatter her if it seemed to reflect a genuine representative of Miranda. She was in truth now a figure that could not be seen without some degree of astonishment for its loveliness—tall, slender, straight, of the purest complexion, and most beautiful features; her hair of a golden auburn, her eyes full at once of spirit and sweetness; a combination of delicacy that checked presumption, and *interest* that captivated the fancy.

Her mind had a very early inclining to criticism and satire. Among her books she found the works of Dr. Young, and now began to read his 'Universal Passion.' Towards evening she walked to Orange Street, and received a letter of reply from her sister D. Hunt. The contents were probably agreeable to her, for she seems to have quitted her chamber, and passed some time below with the people of the house, who greatly admired her, and no doubt regretted the mode in

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which their lodger had chosen to pursue her "juvenile indiscretions."

Little as she appears to have courted notice, avoiding the high streets, and the time of the day when they are most frequented, as well as the play-houses, which she most longed to visit and enjoy, she was greatly surprised in the morning of the 19th at receiving a letter from a *stranger*, addressed to her by her own name. With the fearless confidence in her firmness, which seems never to have deserted her, she says, "I answered it immediately, then wrote to Sister D. Hunt; towards evening walked in search of a porter." On the 20th she received another letter from the strange gentleman, whose name was found to be Redman: she answered it directly: in the evening had another, which she honoured with the same prompt payment—met her sister D. Hunt, and drank tea with her at a garden, keeping the last reply to the stranger for deliberation in her pocket.

On the 21st she again waited upon Mr. King, and by pure accident "happened (to use her own language) of brother Slender." Among her papers has been found a leaf, paged 133, which appears to have been a part of her *Memoirs;* it relates to this very rencontre, and, as it is only slightly mutilated, perhaps the conjectural supply neither injures nor changes her expression; but we have separated the supplement by a line, for the

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reader's entire satisfaction. Thus she describes it:—

(The words torn off.)

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In the year seventeen hundred and seventy-two, me before, it was, (I think,) fashion- gentlemen occasionally to curse and swear in ; and poor Mr. Slender would be in the fashion, whether it peril to body or soul. He suddenly interrupted our conversation, reeling double pressure of bad health and bad d with an oath demanded "where Miss meant to sleep that night?" him where I lodged; and that, as sent no word to the contrary, I should at Holborn Bridge; he allowed the house to be a able one, but said that he would see me to it; and then with another oath, he ed, that by six in the morning ould come for me in a post-chaise, and take down to my village of Standingfield. all his numerous faults, Mr. Slender in reality good-natured: but his good-nature ed in frightening you to death, the pleasure of recovering you: in an axe over your head, for the of pronouncing a reprieve.

However, as soon as she came home she quitted her lodgings, and went to her sister Huggins's, where she dined, and then with her came to her sister Hunt's. As company supped there, she had not an opportunity of reading her third letter to Mr. Redman. She was now happily and re-

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spectably situated among the married members of her family, and nearer to her establishment in life than she could possibly have conceived. In the afternoon of the 22nd she saw Mr. Inchbald at her sister Slender's. From this time, an almost daily intercourse is kept up with all her sisters in town. The following week she received a small packet from Standingfield; and on the 10th of May she wrote for the first time to her excellent mother, and the correspondence was from that period regularly maintained between them. She had now a perfect crowd of her Standingfield acquaintances about her. The packet from Standingfield seems to have filled her with joy; for then, for the first time, she consented to be taken to the play. She visited the theatre afterwards usually twice a week, and sought in every way instruction as an actress, and any engagement that should appear respectable.

From the 7th May, visits are kept up with Dodd, who expresses a willingness to engage her; and on the 16th she settles with him. He had made her some presents, and, it should seem, was fully disposed to try how far a manager's pretensions might carry him with a beautiful young creature in her non-age, who depended upon his favour for the establishment of her independence. This, I am sorry to add, has been the practice in nearly all theatres, though not under all managers. One instance is on record of a

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libertine, himself a husband, whose system, as to the ladies he engaged, was to involve them artfully in pecuniary difficulties, chiefly that they might make the handsomer appearance upon his stage, and then propose the alternative—their dishonour or a prison. I am happy to have known *one* manager, who would not receive a lady of even doubtful character into his company. I hope he was not singular in this pure taste.

She thus notices Dodd's behaviour. On the 18th of May she called upon him, and was "rather frighted:" before tea, however, he called upon her, and she willingly supposed herself mistaken. On the 22nd she had occasion to see him twice; once *after* dinner: she was then "terrified and vexed beyond measure at his behaviour." She does not herself mention the circumstance, but it is pretty well understood that, at one of these interviews, she was so provoked as to snatch up a bason of hot water and dash it in his face; nor, in despite of the usual phrase, "to throw cold water upon the flame," could she be made to conceive that his insolence merited any milder chastisement. They who remember the Foppington of the actor, and his general manners, will laugh at the astonishment which she must have excited in the disconcerted manager. However, she was unwilling to destroy her prospects, where she thought a proper declaration of her principles and purposes might lead any thing but a savage to

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desist from annoying her: with this view she wrote some notes, to which an answer was returned: she called upon him in person, but did not see him, though she was four times at his door. As the engagement was given only to ensnare, it was broken without much shame, and their connexion seems here to have terminated.

She does not appear, however, to have quite despaired of an engagement at the Norwich Theatre; and has two or three interviews, in consequence, with the *harmonious*, but not unprincipled, Griffith. In the mean time, however, she sees Mr. Inchbald (a man of great merit) two or three times a week, to the 26th of May, from which time he passed a great part of each day in her company, and seriously meditated in her a future wife. She had the advantage of his experience and advice in the framing any engagement with Griffith, of which she continued desirous; and he both counselled and consoled her in the disagreeable predicament as to Dodd. Her sister Slender had quitted London to pass a few days at Standingfield: in her absence Mr. Inchbald was extremely assiduous, and on the 2nd of June declared his hopes of their speedy union. Mrs. Slender returned home on the 9th, probably hastened expressly on account of that event; and in the evening Mr. Rice, a Catholic priest, called and married her to Mr. Inchbald. On the 10th, Mr. Inchbald breakfasted with them, and they all

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went to church, where they were again married according to the Protestant rites. They had company at dinner on that important day, but the happy pair were not in the usual style whisked immediately through the dust into the country. Sister Slender and she went quietly to the play in the evening, in defiance of all omens, to see Mr. Inchbald act Mr. Oakley in 'The *Jealous Wife!*'

The public in general little conceive the incessant occupation of an actor's time; the daily discipline of memory; the study of new characters; the morning rehearsals at the play-house, and the evening labours of performance, and that for hours in succession; his very toil the mere relaxation of others; what to the spectator is sport, but to the actor a scene of inquietude and exhaustion, irritated by rivalry, annoyed by prejudice, too frequently by wantonness and brutality; cheered only by applause, not always liberally bestowed, and sometimes lavish where least deserved,—the idol or the puppet of the million. With such a profession Mrs. Inchbald was now connected, and hoped to be identified; and her husband might consider that her rising talent and most lovely person would, by steady perseverance, secure to them so many lucrative engagements, that, even in a worldly view, his marriage might be deemed the most fortunate occurrence of his life. He was himself in his thirty-seventh year, and his wife in

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her nineteenth. They were both of them Roman Catholics, who professed the religion of their fathers, without much examination, or very scrupulous adherence to the discipline of their church.

Mr. Inchbald being engaged to act at Bristol, for that city he and his lovely wife set off on the evening of the 11th of June, 1772. The next day they met Mr. Dodd at Marlborough, who marked his petulance, perhaps his malice, by *not* wishing them joy upon their marriage. They were easily consoled. On their arrival at Bristol, they took lodgings near College Green, and found in the town many of the players with whom Mrs. Inchbald became acquainted at Bury. A calling acquaintance was kept up with such as they preferred, and there was no want of amusement; for, in addition to their walks in that delightful situation, Mrs. Inchbald frequently went to the rehearsals in the morning, and twice or thrice in the week enjoyed the play from the body of the house. To a week of the honey-moon she thought herself fully entitled, and therefore did not mix business with her pleasures; but on the 19th she absolutely began to write out the part of Cordelia. Whatever be the charms of a young débutante, it is a sign of modesty if she even borrows the virtues to heighten her beauty. Cordelia has become the appellative of filial piety. She is beloved for what she *does*, rather than what she says. Tate, in utter violation of her pure and

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unpretending manners, has put into her mouth a stage rhodomontade about "the fierce Thunderer and the earth-born sons of Até." This has become an heir-loom to all possessors of the part, and, I am afraid, is thought the choicest bit of it by nineteen-twentieths of both actresses and audiences. The great magician alone could give voice and action to the divine Cordelia:—

> "Patience and Sorrow strove
> Which should express her goodliest. Once or twice
> She heaved the name of *father*
> Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;
> Cried, 'Sisters! sisters! Shame of ladies! sisters!
> Let Pity ne'er believe it!'—There she shook
> The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
> And clamour moisten'd: then away she started
> To deal with grief alone."

Garrick thought Dr. Johnson's praise of Shakspeare elaborated only by the head; and, as he loved a strong expression, when speaking of his idol, he added, "When Shakspeare wrote, he *dipped his pen in his own heart*." Agreeably to the stage usage of his day and ours, this was taken from the *French*. There was a doctor of the Sorbonne who wrote of the action of God upon his creatures; and of this man the authors of the 'Nouveau Dictionnaire' still more daringly said, "Il trempe sa plume dans le sein de Dieu." "The first time," says Voltaire, "the Deity was ever compared to an ink-bottle."

To return: whether the divinity of sound taste

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yet stirred or not in the bosom of Mrs. Inchbald, and however she estimated the part of Cordelia, she was called upon to attend the severe indisposition of her future Lear; Mr. Inchbald was taken ill on the 27th, and the play was put off on the 29th on account of his indisposition. On the 1st of July he thought himself sufficiently recovered to be able to act Iachimo in 'Cymbeline;' but the next day he found that he had ventured too soon, and very unwillingly laid by a full week to gain his strength and resume his arduous business in the company. It does not appear that his wife pursued her professional studies now, with the requisite ardour. She had a numerous list of correspondents in London, and at Standingfield and its neighbourhood. To her brother George she sometimes wrote; to Edward not at all.

The honey-moon seems to have been religiously observed by our newly-married pair—but that over, they began to dine and drink tea out sparingly. Mr. Inchbald's performance of Oakley in 'The Jealous Wife' had not been entirely forgotten since the wedding night. Among their acquaintance they numbered Mr. and Mrs. Hartley, and Mr. Inchbald seemed particularly attached to them. Now, we imagine from her expression, that, young and inexperienced as she was, our heroine, in a matter of mere *meum* and *tuum*, had rather a quick sight: she did not approve of *their* conduct, as she says: she most likely means that

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the lady took the liberties of beauty not well shielded by principle, and the husband saw them without pain. It is singular enough that Mrs. Inchbald should herself be engaged at Covent-Garden Theatre to fill the very line of character which Mrs. Hartley had previously sustained. She was, like her, tall and striking in her figure, with a similar style of features, and, like her too, had golden hair. It was for this woman that Smith of Drury Lane, at his maturity, made a fool of himself—deserted his wife, with the greatest respect for her all the time, and, like a green boy, would have given up the whole world, as he told Garrick, "rather than desert his *Rose*."

In Ireland, to the disgrace of undiscriminating hospitality, they were courted by many persons of distinction, and were adopted as the *stars* of the ascendant in the dramatic hemisphere. This commerce is now well understood — the poor actors are really not feasted for their *own* sakes; they are, like other delicates of the season, a garnish only at the tables of vanity, and their early display there is the test of the owner's importance.

Mr. Inchbald and his wife boarded with a Mr., Mrs. and Miss Winstone; and he painted a portrait of the young lady while they staid here. Mrs. Inchbald now, in turn, was for some time indisposed; but she usually accompanied her husband to the theatre. Her brother Slender visited

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them in August, and went to Bath, and returned to them. He staid however to witness her first appearance on the stage, which took place on the 4th of September, 1772, in the character of Cordelia—her husband supporting her, and being supported by her, in Lear. We will not imagine it a striking *début;* knowing too well the sure effect of impediment in utterance; the languor that attends a slow and measured speech, always dreading some intractable word in the declamation; and what it gains in correctness more than lost in the check imposed upon the language of passion.

There are many points of similarity in the minds and positions in life of Mrs. Inchbald and her illustrious predecessor Susannah Centlivre. As she had begun her theatrical readings at Standingfield, she probably saw the memoir of that lady, and it might in some degree regulate her own future course. Like herself, Mrs. Centlivre was early in life deprived of a father's care, and suffered under the embarrassments of scanty provision. The resource of the author of 'The Wonder' had been the girlish fancy to see the world; that is London, and try the fortune of her beauty and sprightly manners. She had met with some singular and romantic adventures on the journey; had become both a writer for the stage, and an actress: the parallel had not hitherto

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been very imperfectly made out, and Mrs. Inchbald might now determine to draw it still forward, till it should embrace a fame and a fortune equally distinguished. Years after, when Mrs. Inchbald saw this achieved, she wrote, before 'The Busy-body,' a sketch of her predecessor's life, and mingled her own personal feelings in the language selected to record it.

On this occasion of her first appearance on the stage she would recollect that her model had not been much followed as an actress, and for a time it might discourage her application; however, her husband, though not insensible to amusement, was himself a very steady and zealous actor; and although not fond of repeating her parts before him, she became at last obedient to his wishes, and they *spouted* (as she plainly calls it) at home and in the open air, till at length she hit upon a better tone of declamation than she had set out with.

On the Sunday which followed her *début*, she went with her husband and a party to Wales, returning however the next day to business; and his desire to amuse her led him to show her King's Weston: on this occasion they had a chariot. Bath she visited with an agreeable party on the 13th: they walked to the chapel, cathedral, the theatre, not forgetting the *bath* itself; and on the 18th, Mr. Inchbald having completed his engagement at Bristol, they left it, and arrived in

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London, without any striking occurrence. She soon re-established that intercourse with her sisters, which seems an irresistible instinct in *her*, and led to the happiest results for *them:* unconsciously she was then preparing in her mind a source of bounty, which never dried up, and upon which their age and infirmities could finally draw, when every other channel of supply had become either exhausted or diverted.

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CHAPTER III.

With Mr. Inchbald revisits Standingfield — Voyage to Leith — Engages with Digges — Glasgow rather discouraged — Matrimonial disputes—Acts Shore at Edinburgh—Catholic Chapel—Mr. Inchbald a painter—Mr. Sterling's attentions—Consults the Priest—Superior to a female friend, why?—Indiscreet in corresponding—Male party of pleasure; an accident—Greenock—Edinburgh again; and again Mr. Sterling—Sail for Aberdeen; but obliged to land and journey in the Thespian fashion—Ague and fever—Moves with the Company—Present from the Manager—Performs Imogen — Loses her wedding-ring — Studies French with a master—Mr. Inchbald disputes with the audience —A riot in consequence — They quit Edinburgh, and resolve upon a visit to France.

After remaining a fortnight among her London friends, Mr. Inchbald and she went to Bury in the stage, and from Bury they took a chaise to visit her relations at Standingfield. The good old lady her mother and Deborah came back in the chaise with them to Bury: they saw their friends after the play, at the Ship, where they gave a supper at parting, and then returned to London, that they might go by sea to Scotland, where they were engaged to act with Digges. On the 10th of October they embarked, and her

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admirer R. Wilson was in their company: they had a very stormy passage; but on the 17th they landed at Leith, and, after refreshing themselves for a single day, on the 19th took a chaise for Glasgow, where the manager was then performing. On the 23rd Mr. Inchbald and his friend Wilson saw Digges, and settled that Mrs. Inchbald should act Cordelia on the Monday following, and appear again on Thursday. On Monday the 26th she performed Cordelia to her husband's Lear; but they did not call upon her again till the 6th of November, when she personated the gentle and lovely Anne Bullen. What her royal lover thought of her I know not, her husband acted Cranmer; for Digges, as he acted his favourite Wolsey, the sentence of the character might probably be the feeling of the manager—

> "Anne Bullen! no: I'll no Anne Bullens for *her*;
> There's *more* in't than *fair visage*."

She seems checked by the discouragement, and her expression is disparaging. She sometimes plays a "*witch*" in 'Macbeth'—among the beauties with brooms—and "*walks*," as she technically styles it, in a pantomime before a flat, while the trick is preparing behind it for harlequin. Wilson, it seems, boarded with them, and of consequence was very intimate. He was never very regular in his habits; and Mrs. Inchbald remarks that her husband and he were much out

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together. They saw a great deal of company. Bob, called before Master Inchbald, lived in the same house with them, and acted the juvenile parts of the drama, such as the Fleance of Banquo. There seem at this time to have been too frequent disputes between her husband and herself. She had seen something of the world, but not advanced her fortune, or her happiness very considerably: her beauty had no doubt been felt and acknowledged; but it was appropriated, and would only adorn a very humble condition; for she could not aspire to lead the world in her profession: however, she resolved to try what application could do for her, and, after their arrival at Edinburgh, she really becomes importunate with her husband to hear her in her several parts. They walk on the hills and by the sea-side to spout aloud, (good Demosthenian practice!) and sometimes in their walks read what was *not* professional, if any thing well composed can be considered unprofessional in the studies of an actor. We remember Garrick recommended this discursive reading to Henderson, who had assumed it of his own accord; and so curious had he been, that Steevens was indebted to him for some very happy illustrations of Shakspeare, inserted in his editions of that poet.

Her first appearance on the Edinburgh boards in character (for she went on in the masquerade scene of 'Romeo and Juliet' to look at the northern

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Athenians) was in Jane Shore, on the 29th of November; and in the course of December, she acted Anne Bullen, Cordelia, and even Calista in 'The Fair Penitent,' where, by the way, she is no penitent, but an audacious, ungenerous wanton, enlightened only as to her true interests when the lamp of life feebly glimmers to its close. But here at all events is *passion*, though it is not amiable; and she must have gained no slight control over her impediment, to declaim the language vehemently. She sometimes descended to the Calistas of lower life, and bestowed her fine figure and lovely features upon one of Macheath's ladies—or braided her golden locks with "rosy twine" in one of the Bacchantes of 'Comus.'

This stage habit of collecting the *beauty* of a community for a mere mob is often vehemently condemned by the ladies of the theatre; but we believe the only ground of real displeasure is the being taken from their fire-sides for no other business than merely to be looked at; so they avenge themselves by the most captivating witchery of their countenances, and leave their *rags* to flutter for the character, if there should by chance be any thing appropriate even in them.

Mrs. Inchbald seems now in close correspondence with her brother Slender, whose bad habits she has hinted upon her coming to town, and she felt great uneasiness as to the consequences. The gentry of Scotland do not yet appear to have

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discovered her great merit: their associates are chiefly players; Mr. and Mrs. Peat, Mr. and Mrs. Bland, and Mr. Wilson. She had not quite forgotten that she was a Catholic, and records that on the 6th of December she went to prayers for the first time in Scotland; and after this she is regular in her Sunday attendance at the same chapel, and frequently goes to the eight o'clock morning prayers during the week.

Mr. Inchbald's accomplishments as a painter have already been alluded to. On the 10th of January he attempted a portrait of his wife, but did not please himself. She now considerably extended her range of characters on the stage. She was the Calphurnia to her husband's Cæsar; Lady Anne in 'Richard the Third;' Lady Percy in 'Henry the Fourth;' Lady Elizabeth Grey in 'The Earl of Warwick;' Fanny in 'The Clandestine Marriage;' Desdemona to her husband's Othello on their benefit night; Aspasia to his Tamerlane; Anne Bullen; Mrs. Strickland in 'The Suspicious Husband;' beside her usual masqueradings; among which was to be numbered the Tragic Muse in 'The Jubilee,' which last was a compliment, and indicated the finest person and the greatest intelligence, in every dramatic band among us.

We are now to notice, on her own authority, a subject of considerable moment to her. A Mr. Sterling, it appears, had performed Iago on the night of their benefit; and by a course "of quiet

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attentions, not so pointed as to alarm, nor so vague as to be misunderstood," had been gradually engaging the esteem of this beautiful woman. Mr. Inchbald, for reasons best known to himself, about this time frequently absented himself from his home, and Mr. Sterling on these occasions invariably made a point of visiting her and passing his evenings with her. There is one great advantage in the state of a Catholic lady—that in all cases of private occurrence, in which the slightest alarm is taken, the apprehensive subject can always, if she chooses, and it is her duty to do so, put her conduct under a vigilant guardian—I mean her spiritual director; one who, well acquainted with the progress of the passions, and skilful in discerning the early symptoms of danger, can point out the only safety, with equal sagacity and authority. The Protestant substitute on such occasions is both weak and doubtful. If the female *confidante* is trusty, she is often misled by her very affection for the friend who consults her. She has herself similar passions, and indulges, in her advice to that friend, unknown to herself, the suggestions of congenial weakness. Rivalry also may start up between them, and she may abuse the confidence that has been reposed in her. If any *weakness* should have blushed, or faltered, in her friend's disclosure, it is to be always dreaded; and may be treasured up, as a hint that will secure ungenerous *ascendancy*. Lay confidence is

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an idle thing—Catholic confession a sacred one. She fairly stated her alarm to the Catholic priest, and he replied to her immediately. In pursuance of his advice, she notices that on the 27th of February, Mr. Inchbald being from home, she insisted upon being *alone*, and imagined that her Iago submitted to her pleasure; but he soon resumed his calls as if they had never been checked, and passed such evenings in reading to her. In all this, her mind had the opportunity of comparing very assiduous attention with very palpable neglect: the husband used to mutter something as to the *apathy* of his wife, and she expressed her conviction of the infidelity of her husband. Whether Sterling pointed her jealousy, or with more refined policy treated his conduct as *usual* in the present state of the world, I know not; but her displeasure against Mr. Inchbald made her insist upon separate chambers more than once. Hitherto there was no very great indiscretion; but they left Edinburgh on the 26th of April for Glasgow, Wilson accompanying them, and during her absence from Edinburgh she corresponded with Mr. Sterling; a dangerous indulgence; and she discontinued her visits to chapel. She records both circumstances ingenuously, but leaves no reflection as a comment upon either. She seems to have taken a dislike to the boy Bob, a son of Mr. Inchbald's, by whom she does not

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say, and after their next return to Edinburgh he had separate lodgings.

At Glasgow she performed two or three times a week, and was now the representative of all the *beauties* in the current plays: she added to her characters those of Clarissa in 'All in the Wrong;' Lucia in 'Cato;' Mary Queen of Scots; Zulima in 'The Prince of Tunis;' Lady Jane Grey; Miranda; and Louisa Dudley.

The sad *realities* of life however mingle with these professional records, and on Sunday the 23rd of May, being the first occurrence of the sort since their marriage, her husband leaves her for a day and one night—on a party of pleasure too!—with that son of mischief, Wilson. The bare proposal of such a thing excited violent displeasure in the lady; but the Major (Wilson) kept our Mr. Oakley steady to his point, and carried him off very triumphant and very angry, on this party of pleasure. On the following day Mr. Inchbald came home, very sick of the excursion, and ashamed of the almost repentant limping, which a fall he had met with obliged him to display on his entrance. Perhaps the best tempered wife in the world might have deemed, or even pronounced the accident a *judgment* upon the sufferer, for resisting her lawful authority in at least all parties of PLEASURE.

The genius of speculation on the 17th of June

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led them, in conjunction with the rest of the company, to open their house at Greenock, taking lodgings at Port Glasgow. On this occasion Mr. Digges the manager did not accompany them. Here she came into very full employment as an actress, and speaks of Miss Aubrey in 'The Fashionable Lovers' as having been honoured with a repetition. This was the comedy with which Cumberland too hastily seconded his 'West Indian.' Angelica, in 'The Constant Couple,' was followed by Violante in 'The Wonder,' in which her husband acted Don Felix.

A month having passed among the good people of Greenock, a party of them set out in chaises for Edinburgh, where the Inchbalds got their old lodgings, and Mr. Sterling resumed his old habit. They renewed their former intimacy with the Blands and the Peats, and became very closely associated with the manager and (*n'en déplaise*) the manager's lady, Miss Witherington. Mrs. Inchbald was often honoured with an airing in their chaise to and from the theatre; generally spent Sunday with them; and thus propitiated, by her indulgence as to the lady, on the 22nd of July Mr. Digges gave her orders to write for her brother George Simpson. We shall have to show greater ladies, ere long, making the same gentle sacrifice to their interest.

But she was soon to experience more of the annoyances of those comedians "who chance to

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travel," as Hamlet says. In the evening of the 2nd of August they went to Leith, and took shipping for Aberdeen: the wind was foul, and their vessel made so little way, that they were not above fourteen miles on their voyage when the morning broke. On the evening, reluctant to keep his passengers in a state of sickness without progress, the captain put to shore. Mr. Inchbald and his wife got a lodging by themselves at a small inn, in a little village called Ely, where, after having refreshed themselves, they took a delightful walk together to a seat which afforded them a beautiful prospect of every thing but a fair wind. On the 4th they were often at the seaside; but her professional witchcraft could not "give them a wind."[1] They grew very uneasy, and the day following she and Mr. Inchbald, with Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, and Bob, as she styles him, set off on foot on their journey to Aberdeen. They dined in a garden; rode a little way on coal-carts; drank tea at St. Andrews; hired a cart part of the way to the ferry, where they slept. Early in the morning of the 6th they crossed the river, and walked eight miles. Mrs. Wilson however, having tired, they took a cart to Aber-

[1] The three witches in Macbeth, like those of Norway, have the entire control of the winds.

2 W. I'll give thee a wind.
1 W. Th' art kind.
3 W. And I another.
1 W. I myself have all the other.

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brothick, where they dined. Another cart took them all to Montrose. They set off late in the evening to walk the next stage; but a farmer whom they met on the road recommended a half-way house to them, where they slept; and early in the morning Mr. Inchbald and she, "renewed in all their strength," set out to walk alone to Bervie, which they reached by breakfast-time. They went in a cart to Stonehaven, and, having joined their companions, at length reached Aberdeen, Mr. Inchbald and Mr. Wilson going before.

Here they lived in their usual society, as to calling acquaintance; but they frequently visited Mr. Digges and Miss Witherington. Her professional utility now suffered a very serious interruption: on the 3rd of September our lovely heroine was attacked by an ague and fever, which lasted above a fortnight, and was succeeded by a swelled face, from which she suffered considerably. Here her acquaintance commenced with Dr. Brodie, who attended her with the utmost solicitude, and it is very probable restored her by his skill; for at one time she was in such danger, that Mr. Inchbald sent for a priest, and in this and every other attention to her demonstrated his affectionate and *hearted* value for her.[1] We do her the justice to say, that though she leaves her occasional complaints uncrossed, she uses no niggard measure when recording her husband's kindness. Mrs. Burrel was during her illness a great part of

[1] "Yield up, O love, thy crown and *hearted* throne." OTHELLO.

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most days in her apartment, and her interesting loveliness had excited the attention of a lady, who on this occasion introduced herself to her acquaintance; called on her several times; as her state improved, took her out in her carriage with her; and on parting, made her a valuable present, as a token of her regard. With this lady, whose name was White, she afterwards corresponded. We mention this particularly, because it seems to commence an important distinction that attended her through life, namely—that, beautiful as she was, she was courted by ladies of birth and consequence and virtue, and lived with them always upon terms of no servile compliance, but frank and ingenuous friendship. She never condescended to flatter.

At Aberdeen she acted, upon her recovery, decidedly as the leading performer of her sex; and her industry and application will be apparent by a list of her performances, which we shall throw into a note, with their dates, below.[1]

[1] Aug. 12, Louisa Dudley—West Indian.
18, Witch—Macbeth.
23, Juliet—Romeo and Juliet.
26, Jane Shore—Jane Shore.
28, Anne Bullen—Henry VIII.
30, Cordelia—Lear.
31, Clarissa—All in the Wrong.
Sept. 18, Mary Queen of Scots.
20, Mourning Bride.
27, Calista—Fair Penitent.
28, Zulima—Prince of Tunis.
29, Cordelia—Lear.

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Her very professional journeys were exceedingly trying to her constitution; for the means of travelling were then far from uniform, even if success had rendered expense of slighter moment than anything short of a travelling *star* in our own times could think prudently of sustaining. The season having closed at Aberdeen, the leading performers, in two chaises, set out on the 9th of November, on their return to Edinburgh. They breakfasted the next morning at Montrose, and were disappointed of performing there—they supped and slept at Arbroath. On the 11th they breakfasted at Dundee, and, after the ferry there,

Sept. 30, Violante—Wonder.
Oct. 2, Mrs. Strickland—Suspicious Husband.
4, Imogen—Cymbeline.
5, Miss Neville—She Stoops to Conquer.
9, Lucia—Cato.
10, Queen—Spanish Friar.
12, Miss Aubrey—Fashionable Lover.
14, Belvidera—Venice Preserved.
16, Desdemona, to Mr. Young's Othello.
Tragic Muse and Rosalind—Jubilee.
18, Monimia—Orphan.
19, Palmira—Mahomet.
21, Fanny—Clandestine Marriage.
25, Silvia—Recruiting Officer.
26, Jane Shore.
30, Calphurnia.
Nov. 1, Indiana—Conscious Lovers.

She was taken off the stage from indisposition; but acted,

Nov. 2, Lady Jane Grey.
6, Lady Anne—Richard III.
8, Sigismunda.

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could get no chaise. She says, "I walked part of the way, then rode in a cart to Cupar, where we drank tea." At night they set off in a cart again —it was a dismal night—perfectly unsheltered, they were all wetted to the skin, and in this chilled and miserable state, slept at a small public-house. On the morrow they had, in defiance of rheumatism, to put on their wet clothes; but, however, they were driven in a cart very fast to Kirkaldy. They crossed the water to Leith, and took a coach to Edinburgh, overjoyed to arrive at their old lodgings, after this truly Thespian progress.

At Edinburgh she acted, in the three months from her arrival, precisely the same characters as she had done at Aberdeen. Her principal associates appear to be Mr. Digges and Miss Witherington—(this might be management). She records that Mr. Sterling had been to London and returned, but was less intimate with her than he had formerly been. She corresponds regularly now with her family, and much with Mrs. Bartley, a Catholic lady, and is again a constant visitor to the Chapel.

In all probability she now began to revolve the chances of becoming a writer as well as actress, and, deeming the French language indispensable, she began her study of it on the 9th of January, 1774, in her twenty-first year. She exercised herself in translation. Her husband now demurs no longer at listening to her rehearsals; they walk,

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as before, on the hills and by the sea-side; and when they are at home, he reads much to her while she sits and works. The boy Bob is now become more agreeable. She goes seldom either to the play or rehearsal, and in the evening plays at cards with him, while Mr. Inchbald is otherwise engaged. George Inchbald had arrived on the 10th of January, 1774, and brought her letters from London. Her wet excursions seem now to have settled a cough upon her lungs, and she was confined with fever a fortnight; when she herself got better, her husband was taken ill, and went in a chair, when obliged to go to the theatre. On the 19th of February she mentions her reading the book of the "Sufferings of our Lord:" she sometimes reads it aloud to Mr. Inchbald.—O weak and insufficient Humanity! on the 20th her husband and she disputed concerning *parting of salary!*

The 10th of April they had a chaise to convey them to Glasgow, and they took a Miss Jones with them, who seems to have lodged in the same house with them during their stay; and Mr. and Mrs. Weston also appear to have boarded in the same house. She does not seem to have enjoyed her health at Glasgow. She visited Edinburgh and Dundee; and the day after their arrival at the latter place, she has a letter from her sister Slender to inform her of the death of her husband. We shall not be surprised to read in the Journal

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of an actress when in Scotland, that she went on the 16th of June, 1774, with Mr. Digges and his family to Glammis, and saw the Castle of Macbeth. The great Magician has rendered us the captives even of his Castles in the North: we enter their charmed circle, and are spell-bound. Though he has marked those of his own country with the terrors of assassination, they yet want the locality of superstition. It is *witchcraft* alone that elevates Macbeth beyond the tyranny, the murderous thought, and bloody execution of other kings, his equals, and more than his equals in guilt.

She appears to have visited Haddington and Kelso in the summer, and acted there. At Christmas she seems to be deeply engaged with her husband and brother in her Catholic duties. In the beginning of 1775, her brother, whom Mr. Digges had engaged with his wife also, to oblige her, made his first appearance at Edinburgh in the humble character of Benvolio: on this occasion she acted Juliet. On the 30th of January, she hears that Mrs. Weston is gone off with Mr. Wilson. Mr. Digges frequently made her presents—a silk gown—half a dozen silk handkerchiefs; and all looked to permanent connexion with the manager. However, on the 20th of April, her brother and his wife chose to quarrel with Digges, and he discharged them both. But by the kind mediation of Mr. and Mrs. Inchbald, upon Mr. Simpson's submitting to be forfeited five pounds, the matter was

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made up. On the 7th of May, 1775, they were again on the move for Aberdeen; and this season Digges and Miss Witherington lodged above them in the same house, which secured a great deal of their attention. In July, she again tried Mr. Inchbald's skill in a miniature, and sat several times. She heard from her sister, and cousin Hunt, that Debby was gone to France. She has frequently noticed, in her stage progress, the tendency to laughter that seized her involuntarily. On the present occasion she thus points it out—"Angelica and Foresight—I laughed in the last speech"—as we have seen Miss Farren do at Parsons, when playing those characters a very short while after. The genuine comic actor is irresistible even on the very boards you tread with him.

On her return to Edinburgh, on the 29th of July, she was again seized with cold and fever, and was attended by Dr. Aikin. When she got a little better, the sittings for her portrait were resumed. Her husband sat much with her during her illness, and read to her. Dr. Aikin thought there were symptoms of consumption in his patient. The manager augmented his attentions to her: Miss Witherington, too, would propose a little excursion as soon as she could bear it, and carried her to pass the day with them at Bonniton. She mentions that Mr. Sterling was less with her than was usual with him. On the 17th August she

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ventured to resume her professional duties; but she fainted on the stage in Shore, and was unable to finish the part. During her illness, she studied more or less every day to acquire the French language; sometimes painted a little, and read with great avidity accounts of Spain, France, and Italy.

The company now seems to be divided; and Mr. Smith, Mr. Webb, and Mr. Inchbald, were appointed managers. At Glasgow Mr. Inchbald acted; but she was too feeble to bear the exertion, and by advice eat oysters daily to strengthen her stomach. Mr. Digges did not join them till the 18th of September, and on the day following she cut off her hair; at which her husband expressed his anger, not unreasonably. At Dumfries, the next place they visited, they were at great difficulty in finding a stage to act upon; and when at length they succeeded, the ladies would not attend them, the gentlemen said, because Mrs. Inchbald did not perform. In October she accordingly played for her fair patronesses her favourite character Jane Shore; and after her exertion, Captain Storning was deputed by the ladies present to inquire, in their names, how she did? Her landlady was frequently solicitous to introduce ladies to her, and was happy to inform her how beautiful they thought her. Her narrative now has little diversity. Sometimes we have a violent quarrel with Mr. Inchbald, which con-

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tinues for a few days; and at the same time a Mr. Webb introduces himself to her acquaintance, and calls once, and sometimes twice, a day:—perhaps we may not greatly err in connecting these two last articles of intelligence as cause and consequence.

The following letter from Digges will show the degree of estimation in which he held her; and *more*, the dread he entertained lest she should be offended by adding a few *seeming* years to the *features* of her beautiful countenance, and a matronly garb to a figure of two-and-twenty:

"MADAM, Nov. 26th, 1775.

"I must request you'd be so obliging to take the part of Zaphira, which I must open with on Wednesday.

"I cannot depend on any other person's attention or punctuality with safety to the welfare of the theatre. You will therefore accept of this as an apology for sending it now.

"I should wish you'd be so good to dress it in a matron-like manner; much depends on that. And if you would suffer your face to be a *little* mark'd, as I have seen Mrs. Woffington's in *Veturia*, it must greatly serve you. I am, Madam,

"Your most obedient servant,

"W. DIGGES."

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We suppose she complied; at least as far *as possible.* In Woffington, she had *beautiful* authority for doing so.

But on the 2nd of December they returned to Edinburgh, where she found her brother and sister, and her usual friends, to welcome her. Amid her daily performances we find the notice of her Catholic attention to the great festival. The 24th was a Sunday: she was three times at prayers, besides praying and reading at home, and had an interview moreover with Mr. Hay, the priest. On the 30th she acted Violante, in 'The Wonder;' but at rehearsal she had received from Mr. Digges the present of a beautiful pair of ear-rings and necklace. On the following day she drank tea at Mrs. Montgomery's, and met Lady Jane Gordon there. We hope the presents of her friend Digges were displayed on the occasion.

The year 1776 commenced unluckily. On the 1st of January she acted Imogen, and her husband Iachimo, not Posthumus. He took the bracelet from her arm, and was welcome to it; but she found a serious loss indeed in her wedding ring, which had somehow slipped from her finger at the house, probably in washing her hands, for it was found by Mrs. Waterson. Her cough still troubling her, on the 2nd of January her sister acted Juliet instead of her. There had been, unfortunately, for

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some time a gathering dissatisfaction on the part of Mrs. Simpson her mother. On the 9th day of this year of disasters, she received from the good lady her last letter back again in a blank cover. Now this last letter, before it was sent off, had been shown to Mr. Inchbald and her brother, who both highly approved of it. Occasional disputes with Mr. Inchbald are mentioned, which usually reduce her to *tears*, and are soon made up after the dust is laid : he appears, with a few foibles, to have been a remarkably attentive and domestic husband. She occasionally was complimented with a seat in Mr. Digges the manager's box—that enviable distinction in the profession ; though the intimacy between the families had for some time rather languished. She began, on the 25th of January, to take lessons in French, of a master ; and on the 28th of February paid him for twenty lessons the humble sum of one guinea. These lessons she subsequently continued. Her application never failed her ; all that she wanted was to pronounce well, and get rid of the English accent while speaking to her friend Mrs. Mills, with whom she used to converse in that language for practice.

Mr. Inchbald was not only an assiduous actor, master of a great range of parts, which, with new study occasionally, was quite sufficient to employ him ; but he followed very keenly his love of paint-

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ing, which sometimes decorated the processions of the stage with flags that *waved* to his honour; and at others stooped to the more patient toil of executing such likeness as he could give to miniature portrait. We do not recommend this sedentary relaxation, nor indeed any *secondary* employment to an actor; it by degrees engrosses too much attention for the interest of the principal, and is apt to insinuate itself as a resource in case the original occupation should fail him: this slowly begets a feeling of inconveniences, (and all pursuits have them,) which would never have been felt but for this high-minded accessory—the man becomes pettish and uncomplying; offence is given to those, who will not be offended with impunity; and the disgraced actor is left to his resource, and finds it *nothing*.

On the 12th of June, Mr. Inchbald had a great dispute with the audience. On the 15th his gentle wife played Shore, and, as they expected, there was a riot on Mr. Inchbald's account. She does not register the particular cause of it; but it was decisive, and the Inchbalds quitted Edinburgh, and closed their engagement with Digges. They felt, it is true, no pressing want: happily too, he had a *resource;* he had *two* strings to his bow; and therefore, without hesitation, they determined to pay their long meditated visit to France. Sterne had rendered *sentimental journies*

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delightful; the feeling had only to enter this new field, to be secure of universal sympathy. But, alas!—

> The trembling feet his guiding steps pursue
> In vain;—such bliss to one alone,
> Of all the sons of soul, was known;
> And Heaven and Fancy, kindred powers,
> Have now o'erturn'd the inspiring bowers;
> Or curtain'd close such scenes from ev'ry future view.

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CHAPTER IV.

St. Valleri—Abbeville—Arrive at Paris 28th of July, 1776—Objects of both husband and wife—French declamation—Corneille, Racine — Mrs. Inchbald's abstracts — Suddenly quit Paris — In September back to Brighton—Bad circumstances—London—Wilson, Digges—The Inchbalds arrive at Liverpool—Engage with Younger — She is well received — Commences a friendship with Mrs. Siddons and Miss Farren—Their reverse of fortune—Steam improvement—Baggage by sea in old times—Studies at Liverpool —Manchester—First sees Mr. Kemble—Much unsettled—Northwick—Mode of living at that time — A Catholic doubt—Mr. and Mrs. Siddons at York — They go to Birmingham and live *en famille*—Separation—London, Canterbury.

On the 2nd of July, 1776, at two o'clock in the morning, after writing a note to her mother to inform her of what just then she perhaps hardly considered a misfortune, her husband and she quitted Edinburgh, and travelled by land to Shields. There they took shipping on the 7th; and, after a passage of a fortnight, landed at St. Valleri on the 23rd. On the day following they visited Abbeville and all its convents and churches. On the 25th they attended mass, and heard a sermon at the Great Church: there was now no diffi-

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culty in living as Catholics openly; they needed no toleration; and to be an English Catholic, reconciled in a great degree the people of France to two not very splendid travellers from England. "When a man," says Sterne, "can contest the point by dint of equipage, and carry on all floundering before him, with half a dozen lackeys and a couple of cooks," the mere trifle of his religious creed will be thought a trifle every where but in Turkey; there the insolent carriage of a Christian dog will rouse the most indolent Moslem from the elysium of his opium, with a desire to kick most heartily the audacious misbeliever. The Inchbalds were come to France to fraternise with its arts and its language, and their plan was for the husband to take lessons in painting, and the wife in French, as soon as they were a little settled at Paris. To the Capital therefore they pressed on without delay. They went up the Somme on the 26th to Amiens; and as every body knows that Amiens is in the road to Paris, on the 28th they entered that city, and as usual made acquaintance with some English gentlemen; thus disproving, as all his countrymen invariably do, the assertion of Sterne, that "an Englishman does NOT travel to see Englishmen." On the contrary, as its representative,

"His heart untravell'd fondly turns to *home*."

He has for the most part little facility in languages,

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and none of that *prévenance* that interests others, and makes the beginning of new friendships look like the accidental renewal of old ones.

We have hinted at one advantage possessed by the Inchbalds—there was another, equally *Catholic* in Paris—Mrs. Inchbald was a beauty, a *bel-esprit*, and an actress; this drew to her hotel an Abbé, who was very entertaining and attentive, and, as a *cicerone*, of the first order. It was to peruse the great volume of Paris, with a *key* to its contents; and pass by the common-places, which only occupy the ignorant. She was visited too, assiduously, by a Carmelite friar, who, so far from "begging merely for his convent," made her some interesting presents; and the English gentlemen, who had introduced themselves, Mr. Belcour, Mr. Fenwick, and Mr. Power, repeated their calls occasionally.

Mr. Inchbald, as a subject for his lessons in painting, again began a miniature of his wife; and at one time thought that he might get a living in France as an artist—a supposition hardly excusable at his age, and with his experience of the world. The artists of France have, however, many of them made splendid fortunes in London, upon a mere letter introducing them to Garrick, and really fine talent to justify their pretensions. But Mr. Inchbald, late in life, was at most but inquiring his way into one art, upon being disappointed in another. However they did not neglect the op-

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portunities, which Paris afforded at this time, of forming a correct notion of the very opposite styles of performance in both tragedy and comedy, prevailing in the rival capitals, and which arise more from the nature of their languages than the manners of the people. The rhythm of the French language is greatly independent of emphasis and pause; it cannot be broken into small fragments, except for striking and conclusive replies, as the "Qu'il mourût" of Horace; or that distracting ambiguity in the speech to Iphigénie about the coming sacrifice (by the way her own), in which the monarch and the father are combined in a manner to defy any parallel in ancient or modern verse, the "Vous y serez, ma fille," of Agamemnon.[1] The declamation is *entraînante*, not pointed; as the actor proceeds, the volume of his voice increases, reminding one of the swell of an organ. The hearer kindles with him to the close of what we should deem an endless narration, and

[1] The reader will pardon the editor, who, though an Englishman, need not blush, after Mr. Fox, to testify his admiration of Racine, if he makes the point still stronger by an extract. — The speakers are Agamemnon and his daughter.

IPHI. L'offrira-t-on bientôt?
AGAM. Plutôt que je ne veux.
IPHI. Me sera-t-il permis de me joindre à vos vœux?
Verra-t-on à l'autel votre heureuse famille?
AGAM. Hélas!
IPHI. Vous vous taisez?
AGAM. Vous y serez, ma fille.
Adieu.

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is cheered and charmed by the beauty of the versification. Of all this there would now be few better judges than Mrs. Inchbald: she was at all times an acute thinker and steady observer: what she had read, she had studied intensely, and she made abstracts copiously of all that interested her. From her volumes of these studies, in her own hand-writing, we perceive clearly her mode of achieving that fulness of mind that rendered her composition and conversation always affluent, and never stinted nor abrupt. She extracted the very marrow of all history and biography: she took exact minutes of all remarkable places, the relics of departed empire, and was particularly exact in chronology. She made abstracts of these, her studies, for her *sisters*, that they might enjoy the harvest without its toil, and be intelligent women.

On the 17th of August Mrs. Inchbald received a letter from her mother. Whatever objects of either health, business, or pleasure Paris might hold out to them, seem to have been closed abruptly by this letter. It is fair to presume that the pecuniary assistance which they had expected from the farm could not be supplied; for they in a few days quitted Paris in the Diligence for Rouen, whence they immediately pressed on to Dieppe, with the view of getting over to Brighton as soon as possible. It was the end of August when they reached Dieppe; and yet

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so urgent was the necessity for supply, that she now summoned up resolution enough to commence author; and, on the 31st, actually began a farce, which might contain the *prima stamina* of her future fortune.

On the 18th of September they were, in spite of the autumnal equinox, obliged to take the packet to Brighton, which they reached on the day following, after a stormy passage—perhaps not much beyond Dryden's expression:

> "The passage yet was good; the wind, 'tis true,
> Was somewhat *high*, but that was nothing new,
> No more than usual equinoxes blew."

That interest which she bore about her through life had excited the attention of her fellow-passengers. A Mr. Grub, Mr. and Mrs. Baker, and Mr. Cradock, called upon them at Brighton, where they staid about a fortnight in great distress and anxiety. Thus we see this miserable professional succedaneum of living by his pencil in France was scarcely attempted, ere it was found delusive; and, instead of remaining in France a year, as we have been told they did, they were back in England in less than eleven weeks. Nothing was now left them but to try for theatrical engagement, with the Edinburgh discouragement buzzing about the theatrical world: this they did not find a very easy matter. Mrs. Inchbald depended a good deal upon *harmonious* Griffith, her early passion; but he re-

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newed his early excuses; and the future prospect became extremely disheartening. She records, without reserve, that at Brighton they several times went without either dinner or tea, and once went into the fields to eat turnips instead of dining, their funds were so very low. They visited the theatre while at Brighton, as we may suppose, with orders, but their minds were untuned, and the play-house merely passed away the time, and prevented exclusive reflection at all events:

> "Did not give them leave to ponder
> On things would hurt them more."

On the 30th they left Brighton for London: they found their friend Wilson happily housed at Covent Garden, where Dick was the present Shuter, and had made a strong hit indeed in Don Jerome in 'The Duenna,' which was now starting to run its second season, having been brought out the year before. As he was the first Jerome that we ever saw, so he was certainly the best: there was a bustle of hilarity about him that kept up the scene delightfully, and he sang the song of songs, "Oh, the days when I was young," so as to let every body see "how merry an old man can be." Poor Wilson, we used to hear, was dreadfully imprudent, and continually in difficulties; like old Bannister, he was a coffee-house wit, and talked to his friend in their box, to entertain

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sundry parties *around* them, who did not apologise for listening, and loudly joined in the laugh. We do not know that these services produced his favourite "woodcock for supper, without his *bill*," but he might sometimes leave it unpaid.

Digges was also in London at this time, and ready at all times to advise them; but still engagement seemed unlikely, and on the 4th of October they quitted town in the stage for Chester. Mrs. Inchbald had not seen either of her sisters in London, nor corresponded with them since she left Edinburgh. They arrived at Chester on the 6th, where they met their old acquaintances, Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Whitlock; and, as actors always do on arrival, took the *sanctuary* of the play-house. The next day they proceeded to Liverpool, and on the 11th Mr. Inchbald agreed with Mr. Younger, the manager, to stay there, and act with him on suitable terms. Here was, therefore, a resting-place secured, and no one was ever productive of more lasting comforts. Here she commenced an acquaintance with that great woman, Mrs. Siddons, which lived with undiminished respect and kindness, through all the changes of their fortunes, for the space of five-and-forty years. She went on the first Sunday to the Catholic chapel at Liverpool, and who can doubt the sincerity of her acknowledgments?

After a week taken to prepare herself with suitable dress, for her boxes had not yet been forwarded

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from Scotland, on the 18th of October she performed Juliet to an audience sufficiently indulgent, and her husband acted her stage-father, Capulet. She was dissatisfied with herself then, and sternly criticised her performance of the Mourning Bride on the 21st; but Younger, the manager, told her husband she had played *well.* On the 23rd she acted Mrs. Strickland, and they both took their accustomed walks in the Jubilee. On the 25th she performed Cleopatra in Dryden's All for Love. Since they left him in London they had been corresponding closely with their friend Digges, and on the 27th he arrived at Liverpool to act, on the fame of his Cato, and, generally speaking, all the characters of manly bearing, to which Quin had formerly given corresponding weight and dignity. Digges, moreover, had great pathos.

On the 29th (as we are sure she would wish) we record in a detached paragraph that she was in the box with Mrs. Siddons.

On the 30th Digges made his first appearance in Cato, and was supported in Sempronius and Lucia by the Inchbalds. Nov. 4th she played Lady Brute to the Sir John of Digges; and Anne Bullen to his Wolsey, which we used to think masterly; besides that, he personally resembled the Cardinal. She had now a letter from her sister Hunt, and answered it immediately. With her brother, George Simpson, she had not intermitted

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in correspondence, and Bob Inchbald heard from her occasionally.

On the 1st of December she heard that her brother Huggins was dead. The family harmony seems once more re-established, though she does not feel herself quite settled in her profession. Liverpool and Manchester were resting-places for a time; but they seem to have aspired to the York company; and she wrote frequently to both Wilkinson and Emery. They at length succeeded, and Mr. Inchbald died under the management of Tate Wilkinson.

Among the amusements to be derived from journals so faithfully kept as those of Mrs. Inchbald, may be numbered the flat contradictions which they give to the after-tales of prosperous vanity. There have been, and no doubt will be many, who have industriously laboured to blot out their early annals, as if ashamed of not having always been great and affluent. Let them learn from Mrs. Inchbald's papers, that such a woman as Mrs. SIDDONS was indefatigable in her domestic concerns, for her husband and her child; that she neither felt degraded nor unhappy, but cheerfully lightened her task by *singing* away the time; and that, on the 9th of December, 1776, Mr. and Miss FARREN took a benefit together, without once dreaming of a coronet that in a few years was to bestow nobility upon the name. When the one lady drove to Buckingham House,

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in the royal carriage, as the preceptress of the Princesses of England; and the other, as the most respected friend of the Derby family, from her house in Green Street, in her own chariot, to the theatre: mistresses as they were in the profession, they would exclaim, that their great poet had pronounced the whole world to be *but* a stage; that they were in the reversing fifth act of some changeful drama, of which a single scene shut out their former embarrassments; and when they went home after their toil to rest, instead of waking as usual from a *dream*, they started to find all real, and beheld independence and honour bound to them during life.

We, who are so happy as to live in a world of *steam*, have forgotten the tardiness of our old locomotion; — the moor-fowl from the north, that, when they reached us at length, were in a condition to walk back again—the well-timbered trunks, that were doomed to lie wind-bound, for weeks together, in some unpassable roads, on board of vessels not so fortunate as to be lost, (for insurance can make that easy to their owners,) but out of time, and short of provision, rotting for want of action, and losing all passengers that could *afford* to lose their patience and get into a stage. Six months did our friends the Inchbalds expect the arrival of their boxes from Greenock: at last they were, we were going to say, satisfied,

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hearing that they were lost off the Isle of Man. However, they actually arrived in February, and no doubt experienced the usual welcome of such Ulyssean wanderers; and Lord Townley would supply the sentiment with suitable language:— "Long-parted friends, that pass through gentle voyages of life, receive but common pleasure at their meeting; but from a *shipwreck* saved, we mingle tears with our embraces."

Among her studies, while she remained at Liverpool, we find a suitable mixture of the ancients with the moderns. If she read the 'Man of Feeling' and the 'Man of Nature,' she also read Valerius Maximus (in French), and Horace with great delight (in English). Happily for her, she neither felt nor fancied herself a commentator. She was sensible, not learned; and would have blessed her easy condition could she have read the declaration of Jer. Markland as to Horace, "That after all the pains he and others have taken to explain Horace, there is not a single Ode, Epode, Epistle, or Satire, which he can truly and honestly say he perfectly understands." "Was there ever a better instance," says Hurd, "of a poor man's puzzling and confounding himself by his own *obscure diligence?* A man of learning, but of slender parts and sense, besotted by a fondness for his own peculiar study, and stupified by an intense application to the *minutiæ* of it." Mrs. Inchbald took her Horace as Francis deli-

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vered him to her perusal, and we have Dr. Johnson's authority that he had best succeeded with the whole; though, as Dryden has shown in one remarkable instance, and Pope in more, *imitation* may catch more of both spirit and manner than literal, or even liberal, translation.

On the 17th of December they left Liverpool with a party in a post-coach, about eight o'clock; and by ten were overturned, but not at all hurt: by six in the evening they found themselves at Manchester. Of her stage progress this month she has not much to tell: she performed Jane Shore and the Mourning Bride in the remaining fortnight. Mr. Inchbald, however, was constantly employed: he acted both in play and farce. They found here several Roman Catholic families fond of their society, and kept more company than they had been accustomed to do, sometimes playing cards. In January, 1777, the tragedy of 'Charles the First' was rather popular, and she acted the Queen, and seems satisfied with herself: her husband on this occasion was not the Charles, but the Cromwell. On the 18th they drank tea and supped at Mrs. Siddons's: there she first saw her brother, Mr. Kemble, who seems to have been pleased with his new acquaintance, for, in the following month, he took his tea and supped with them on two following evenings. He was now in his twentieth year, his countenance remarkably striking, his figure, though muscular, slender: he

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greatly exceeded the usual measure of learning among young men, was very domestic in his habits, and fond of a friendly fireside, where he could read aloud if it was desired, or take his share in any sports, however trivial, or any occupations, however slight,

"If they command, whom man was born to serve."

She seems to have paid him the homage of very particular study as a character out of the common road, and consequently in some danger of losing his way; for as to the powers of his genius, perhaps they needed the brilliant success of his sister to warm them to their full expansion, and prepare the public for a style of acting somewhat scholastic and systematic.

Mrs. Inchbald now felt herself gradually strengthen, both in thought and expression, and in February began to write a novel, a brief outline of her 'Simple Story.' Such is always the commencement of young writers, who hurry to the *end* impatiently, as the new-fledged bird makes a short flight, and ascertains that his pinions will bear all they have yet to carry. At this time she was reading and carefully abstracting 'Lord Chesterfield's Letters,' Mr. Pope's 'Essay on Man,' and man's nature itself, drawn forth in Spanish scenes by the 'Gil Blas' of Le Sage. Chesterfield, in spite of Dr. Johnson's candour, has a good deal suffered among us as a

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moralist, by teaching his son (designed for a statesman) the arts by which as a diplomatist he had himself succeeded. Independently of such lessons, there are few writers from whom so much practical wisdom can be drawn. We were certainly a good deal astonished to see the stores which Mrs. Inchbald has entered from his pages in her common-place book. 'Gil Blas' she was now well able to enjoy in its original language, which, notwithstanding the challenge of Spain, is certainly *French*.

She now becomes remarkably unsettled; wishes to leave Manchester, and go back to Standingfield; has almost daily differences with Mr. Inchbald; and visits as constantly from Mr. Kemble. If the reader may suspect that these two facts have some relation to each other as cause and consequence, we can only assure him that it was unintentional on the part of Mr. Kemble, who was too honorable to meditate injury under the mask of friendship; and therefore only shows the danger in wedded life, whether there be disparity as to years or not, of permitting a daily and close comparison with others, who may be in person superior, and, as strangers, necessarily more complaisant, not to say obsequious. Mrs. Inchbald seems to be again in danger of decline, and complains of loss of appetite. On the 24th of March they proceed to put their design into effect, and get into a chaise to pass a few days at

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Northwick; after which, through Appledurcombe, they arrived at country lodgings on Russell Moor; there living together, and in much harmony, we find, with the Inchbalds, Mr. and Mrs. Siddons, Mr. Kemble, Mr. Lane, and Mr. Jefferson. While her husband paints, Mrs. Inchbald reads with Mr. Kemble. In the afternoon they all walk out, and in the evening play cards, and sometimes get more infantine in their sports: these clever people go out upon the moor to play at "blindman's buff" or "puss in the corner." Amid all the opening scenes of ambition or wealth, it is highly probable that every member of the party, at times, heaved a silent wish to be there again.

Mrs. Inchbald did not forget, meantime, her Paris friend, Friar Jerningham; but forgetting to pay the postage of a foreign letter, it came back to her, and was again forwarded, with the silver passport, to the Continent. She stated to him the following case of conscience, which might exhibit her *husband's* mind; but we confess our own impression is, that Father Jerningham saw through the disguise. The gender of the French word *personne* gives the answer a feminine bearing, which it was hardly in his power to avoid; so that without seeing the question in English, where the relative would be *he* or *she*, and mark the sex, we should not know what he had to reply to. We find, in occasional reviews of her

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conduct, many observations that corroborate the opinion that the case was her *own*. Let the reader judge. This is one of them :—

"No other actual sin, but great coldness and imperfection in all my duties, especially in my religious ones, as in prayer and fasting."

And still more pointedly in the following beautiful supplication :—

"Almighty God! look down upon thy erring creature. Pity my darkness and my imperfections, and direct me to the truth! Make me humble under the difficulties which adhere to my faith, and patient under the perplexities which accompany its practice."

Now for the question, and the *answer*, which we have thought it advisable to translate :—

CATHOLIC DOUBT.

"Can a person be admitted to the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church, who confesses he has strong doubts of revealed religion; yet who, acknowledging his own incapacity to decide upon a question of such magnitude as the truth of the Scriptures, humbly submits his reason to the creeds of the Church, and promises to strive against any future disbelief as against any other temptation to sin?"

The answer is singularly moderate, cautious, and yet consolatory; without masking the great difficulty,—*i. e.* the necessity of profound adora-

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tion, love, and gratitude, which the *real presence* inspires and exacts:—

" Il est difficile, et ne seroit peut-être pas sûr, de résoudre d'une manière absolue le cas de conscience ci-dessus présenté. Il paroît d'abord presqu'impossible d'admettre au sacrement de l'Eucharistie une personne qui annonce avoir des *doutes*, et des *forts* doutes, non-seulement sur ce sacrement, mais même sur la religion révélée et sur la vérité des Ecritures. Il paroît qu'on ne peut guère accorder ces doutes avec les sentimens profonds d'adoration, d'amour, et de reconnoissance, qu'inspire et exige la présence réelle. Le plus sûr seroit donc d'attendre que ces doutes soient dissipés, avant d'approcher du redoutable mystère.

" Cependant ces doutes peuvent n'être pas des péchés, mais de simples tentations, nées dans des âmes timorées, tourmentées par des doutes toujours renaissans, quoique toujours repoussés, et qui, pour être absolument vaincus, auroient besoin de la grâce du sacrement auguste de la S^te^ Eucharistie. C'est ce que peut seul juger un confesseur sage et éclairé, connoissant bien la personne travaillée, tourmentée par ces doutes; qui fût bien instruit de la vie qu'elle mène, des *lectures* qu'elle fait, des sociétés qu'elle fréquente, des résistances qu'elle oppose à ces doutes, et de la persévérance avec laquelle elle combat ce genre de tentation."

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(*Translation.*)

" It is difficult, and would not be safe to resolve in a positive manner, the case of conscience above presented. In the outset it appears nearly impossible to admit to the sacrament of the Eucharist one who professes to have doubts, and even strong doubts, not only as to that sacrament, but even as to revealed religion itself, and the truth of the Scriptures. It should seem that such doubts can but little accord with those profound sentiments of adoration, of love, and gratitude, which the *real presence* both inspires and exacts. It would be therefore safest to wait until these doubts were dispelled, before he approached that tremendous mystery.

" In the meanwhile, these doubts may not be sins, but simply temptations arising in timid minds, tormented by doubts constantly recurring, though constantly repelled, and which, to be absolutely conquered, might need the efficacy of the august sacrament of the holy Eucharist. This, however, can only be determined by a sage and enlightened confessor, well knowing the person labouring under and tormented by these doubts; one well acquainted with the life he leads, the books he peruses, the society he frequents, the resistance he opposes to these doubts, and the perseverance with which he combats this kind of temptation."

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From these private perplexities upon awful subjects, we return, as she must have done, to what lay before her in daily life and business.

Mr. Kemble sat for his portrait to Mr. Inchbald, who laboured hard to become a Cosway. Kemble in all probability, absorbed in the future, figured to himself the stage and the managerial chair of Garrick: while his sister, Mrs. Siddons, returned back upon the country from the capital, almost threw away ambition, and, buckling to her hard lot, passed many a day washing and ironing for her family; and, at the conclusion of her labours, regaled the society with a song, and lured her brother to join her in a duet.

On the 11th of May, Mr. and Mrs. Siddons left them to visit York; and happily, the good people there saw something beyond the "ordinary of nature's sale-work" in this highly-gifted woman. Kemble began a course of reading now, that passed the time very profitably—the History of England; and Mrs. Inchbald wrote her notes of the important facts as he proceeded. But he was moreover, little as we should expect it, the very genius of kickshaws, and a master in all the tricks that could be done upon cards. His fair friend and he play together daily, (as she records, without fear of her fame,) with wax, dirt, thread, wire—any thing, in a word, that fancy could apply to the purposes of exercise and amusement.

On their Sundays, though players, they did

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not forget that they were Catholics; and, when not near a chapel, she and Mr. Inchbald read the Mass in French to Mr. Kemble. With great humility he put aside the scholar, and the original Latin, which Douay had for years been riveting to his memory, and neither wished nor affected to be wiser or better than his companions. We are pleased in any place to be able to add these characteristic features of our friend's mind and manners, and delighted to mix them up with talents and virtues congenial with his own.

Cheered with the report of Mrs. Siddons as to York, the party set out on their return to Manchester on the 17th of May. She played a few comic characters in the following week, and her husband quarrelled with Younger the manager about her dresses. It is as natural for managers to be cautious how the lurking treasures of their wardrobe are dragged forth, except upon special emergencies, as it is for the performers on all occasions to desire to be splendidly dressed. Mrs. Siddons often, in her letters, reminded country managers of the delight she took in particular dresses, and she probably, on her return to her old friends at Manchester, innocently added to their discontent. All the "unsunn'd silver of the mine," we suspect, was dragged forth to make her a brilliant star in the North.

To hear of a post-chaise among the members of

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country companies, is a token of success very unequivocal. Mrs. Inchbald thus proceeds in her journal:—On the 26th of May I rose at three in the morning, and left Manchester in a post-chaise with Mrs. Siddons and her maid. The gentlemen rode on the stage-coach. They breakfasted at Macclesfield; after which they proceeded on their journey to Birmingham; Mr. Inchbald on horseback—Mr. Kemble was taken into the chaise by the ladies; till very late in life he was an indifferent horseman. At Birmingham, in their usual style, the Siddons and the Inchbald families lived together; and sometimes Mr. Inchbald painted in the apartment of Mrs. Siddons, whose exertion had given her a fit of illness. His wife went through her parts with Mr. Kemble, and, there will be little doubt, benefited much by his critical remarks. The usual course of study was persevered in; she read Telemachus in French, and began in that language an abridgement of the Bible. In the midst of these labours, the theatre had its full share of her time; there were few plays in which she did not act. The company was under the direction of Mattocks. Here, in the old style, these amusing people, as rogues and vagabonds, were informed against; and their worships the magistrates, in their sagacity, not wiser than the laws, though perhaps wishing they had alike been permitted to sleep together, stopped the performances. Something was now,

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of necessity, to be done. The society, so delightful to them, was broken up; the Siddonses and their brother Kemble went for a few days, first to Warwick, and then to Wolverhampton; what was still worse, on the 21st of June they finally set out for Liverpool: and now, left to draw merely from themselves, Mr. Inchbald left off painting, and went out after such amusement as he could find; his wife very naturally thought herself neglected. While the society held together, they had no disputes; these duets were but rival harmonies. On the separation they soon began to disagree; the sooner therefore that they put themselves in motion, the better for both. Canterbury now afforded an opening; and occupation they saw was the only means of either existing happily, or indeed existing at all. As the first step, it was necessary to get to London, that they might begin their pilgrimage from the right spot; so on the 29th of June they took the stage for the metropolis, and on the day following arrived in safety, and slept at her sister Hunt's. After a day's loitering in town, and only one, they left it for the city of Becket, and arrived, not loaded with offerings for his shrine; for on the first evening they had neither tea nor supper, and the day following neither dinner nor tea.

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CHAPTER V.

Peculiar feelings of actors—Mr. Inchbald improves as a painter—Holcroft her literary adviser—Two months at Canterbury—Aspire to the York Company—Visit Standingfield—Join Wilkinson's Company at Hull—York—Davis dresses her hair—Little jealousies—The Kemble family at Liverpool—Driven from the stage—Had not acted before the King—Mrs. Inchbald at last acts Lady Sneerwell—Scene-painting—Kemble writes to Mrs. I.—His tragedy at Hull—The Inchbalds are rising in professional importance—Sudden death of Mr. Inchbald—Kemble's epitaph upon him—Translation by Mr. Twiss—Friendly intimacy with Kemble—Finishes her novel—Dr. Brodie sends it to Stockdale—He declines the risk—Kemble a guardian of her reputation.

It might at first seem probable that persons who met with no greater encouragement than is here recorded, would become weary of a profession so little profitable, and so constantly harassing; but we seldom find that the feet which have once entered the charmed circle of a stage, can avoid lingering about its limits; and indeed players are not more disinclined to enter into other walks of life, than the professors of other arts are averse to welcome such encroachers upon their monopo-

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lies. There is something too in the very assumption of characters of different ranks, that while it stores the memory with good language, is apt to infuse contempt for vulgar occupation and illiterate society. The actor on a circuit must solicit the patronage of all who can take his tickets, and express his obligations to those with whom it would be misery to associate. We commonly find, therefore, that the intercourse of our present subject is chiefly with the better part of her own profession, her landlady, and her select friends; and such gentry in the neighbourhood, as, being themselves Catholics, accompany her to some chapel of their communion, and please themselves in promoting her welfare as a religious duty. At Canterbury they found a chapel very well attended, on St. Leonard's Hill. She soon had walking acquaintance from the service to her lodgings, and Mr. Inchbald now again turned himself to painting with avidity. He borrowed a likeness of Garrick of a friend, and was anxious to copy it perfectly; but a sudden call to dinner not being immediately obeyed by Mr. Inchbald, his more eager lady, without mercy, tore his labours to pieces. He really seems to have been the most indulgent of husbands. His wife's beauty had constantly foiled him, but at Canterbury the difficulty was surmounted; he got a likeness with which they were both pleased, and it was not the only subject on which they agreed.

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He now walked with his wife constantly, read with her, heard her repetitions of her characters; and the rest of her leisure hours were filled up by correspondence with Mrs. Siddons and her own family.

The Canterbury season seems to have been a speculation of Dimond's, for whose benefit play she acted Lady Randolph, and studied a part in an interlude. Holcroft, who was to become her literary adviser, was acting with them at this time, and threw some of his stage experience into a novel, which was entitled 'Alwyn, or, the Gentleman Comedian.' She played the first-rate characters usually, and her husband the second; generally speaking, she was exempted from farce: but, notwithstanding this elevation, she did not reach the distinction of a night for her sole benefit, but was coupled with Burton, whom some of our readers may remember for his laughable simplicity at Drury Lane in the 'Days of Tilbury Fort,' when poor Waldron was his "accomplished Christopher," and Miss Pope, with all the "finches of the grove" fluttering about her, was the enamoured Tilburina. It was a stroke from which tragedy could hardly have arisen, but for the genuine inspiration of the Siddons.

The Inchbalds passed two months at Canterbury profitably and pleasantly; but their views had pointed to a permanency in the York company, under that "father of the fatherless"

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among players, Tate Wilkinson; and a letter was received from him by Mr. Inchbald on the 16th of August, 1777, which rendered his wife completely happy. As they each of them had half a benefit, and acted two full months on such salaries as could then be given, they were probably by the close of the engagement rather easy in their circumstances. So on the 20th of September they left Canterbury, and on the 22nd arrived at Standingfield upon a visit to the good old lady her mother. There they lived very domestically with Mrs. Simpson and her little grandson, both whose portraits Mr. Inchbald painted, and bestowed some improvements upon his wife's. They occasionally went to Bury, and visited the theatre of course. She did not avoid conversation with her youthful passion, Griffith, but found him perhaps less irresistible than she once thought him; and on the 13th of October they quitted Standingfield for Hull, to commence their engagement in the York company. Her aunts Mingy and Hasington both lived at Hull, and she saw a good deal of them. She did not make her public appearance there till the 28th of October, when she performed Horatia in the Roman Father, and to the close of the year acted in her usual characters with sufficient distinction.

January took them to York, and here a Miss Priestly accompanied her to prayers, and she persevered in her attendance at the chapel. Mr.

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Digges for a few days was at York, and seems to have had some confidential communication with her; the truth was, that Mr. Inchbald seldom fancied any thing of this sort matter of mere indifference; and she mentions on one occasion to have stated to her fond husband, under closed curtains, what perhaps did not greatly increase his confidence in the hero of the north. The fact was, that she had always a very teasing love of admiration and attention. Her friend Davis recommended himself to her by dressing her hair most zealously on the nights she performed: he contrived to be much with them; lodged in the same house; acted, humbly enough it is true, on the same boards; seemed to live upon her smiles; and Inchbald became decidedly jealous of him. Though he had acted her Othello on the stage, he did not in private express all the fond reliance of the Moor on his wife's discretion—

> "'Tis not to make me jealous
> To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company—
> Where virtue is, these are more virtuous.
> Nor from my own weak merits will I draw
> The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt,
> For she had eyes, and chose me."

About Davis they frequently quarrelled. Mr. and Mrs. Waddy lodged in the same house with them at York, and seem to have been much respected. While they were at York, some very severe shocks were experienced by the family at Stand-

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ingfield, and she was frequently in tears at the distresses of her poor mother and sister Dolly. We have before noticed her husband's dislike to the division of their salaries; but it was merely required to supply her with the means of making small presents from her savings to her relations. She practised self-denial, till it became her habit.

Her professional course at York had no particular features, except the personal intimacy of the manager's family; a matter of enviable distinction in this case. As to parts, she was at last forced to give up her determination never to play Lady Sneerwell in the 'School for Scandal;' she performed that *amiable* character on the 21st of April. On the 18th of May they left York and arrived at Leeds, where her husband now began scene-painting, and corresponded with Mr. Whitely upon the subject; for this branch of the art, rude as it is to close inspection, is capable of powerful effect, and has its difficulties and its triumphs. Her attention was now called to the situation of her friends the Kemble family at Liverpool, who were ingeniously submitted to a new ordeal for the establishment of theatrical talent, the "having appeared before the *King*." We are fortunately enabled to give Mr. Kemble's lively record of the riot upon this principle; and feeling some indignation against the public, and much sympathy with the sufferers, cannot refrain

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from anticipating the expression of wisdom which would blush in the faces of the rioters, when, in five short years, they found these persecuted people the darlings of the metropolis, and the favourites of majesty.

The letter is amusing too, from the modesty of Kemble, when constrained to be an author; and the return of his tragedy *unopened* by his future partner Harris, who, as well as Colman, in the case of Mrs. Inchbald herself, like father Time,

> "Had a wallet at his back,
> In which he put alms for oblivion."

"Liverpool, June 18, 1778.

"MADAM,

"I know you love news. I hope you will find mine entertaining, and excuse my boldness in taking my sister's employment from her. But why should I endeavour to find excuses for doing what I think an honour to me? Without more preamble, then, our affairs here are dreadful. On Monday night we opened our theatre. Before the play began, Mr. Younger advanced before the curtain, if possible to prevent any riot, with which he had publicly been threatened for presuming to bring any company to Liverpool who had not played before the King. In vain did he attempt to oratorize; the remorseless villains threw up their hats, hissed, kicked, stamped, bawled, did every thing to prevent his being heard. After

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two or three fruitless entrances, and being saluted with volleys of potatoes and broken bottles, he thought proper to depute Siddons as his advocate, who entered bearing a board large enough to secure his person, inscribed with Mr. Younger's petition to be heard. The rogues would hear nothing, and Siddons may thank his wooden protector that his bones are whole. Mrs. Siddons entered next P. S. and Mrs. Kniveton O. P.—*mais aussi infortunées—hé bien! Madame Kniveton a la mauvaise fortune de tomber dans une convulsion sur les plancs:* the wretches laughed, and would willingly have sent a peal of shouts after her into the next world loud enough to have burst the gates of her destination. They next extinguished all the lights round the house; then jumped upon the stage; brushed every lamp out with their hats; took back their money; left the theatre, and determined themselves to repeat this till they have another company. Well, madam, I was going to ask what you think of all this—but I can see you laughing!—I had almost forgot to tell you every wall in the city is covered with verse and prose expressive of the contempt they hold us in.

"My tragedy has long been finished—long in Mr. Harris's hands, who sent it back to me a month ago unopened, with an assurance that it *would not do.*

"I have written a farce called 'The Female

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Officer' since I saw you, which was played at Manchester with great applause.

"Now to *your* writings. Pray how far are you advanced in your novel?—what new characters have you in it—what situations? how many distressed damsels and valorous knights? how many prudes, how many coquettes? what libertines, what sentimental rogues in black and empty cut-throats in red? I must know all this whenever you write to this quarter again, which I hope will be soon. Write a little in French, but at all events write often. You would, if you knew the pleasure I receive from the good style, lively ideas, and polished manner of your letters. Mrs. Siddons's best respects to yourself and Mr. Inchbald, with mine, who am, Madam,

"Your very humble servant,

"J. P. KEMBLE."

"Mrs. Inchbald, Leeds."

The tragedy which *would not do* at Covent Garden, was however brought out at Hull; the subject of it was Belisarius, and the author we believe emulated his hero in passive fortitude under his disappointment on the great theatre.

Mrs. Inchbald had not forgotten the novel which her friend was urging her to write. In two months she finished the first hundred pages, and in July, on their going to Halifax, continued to make progress in her 'Simple Story.' As bearing upon her work, she read 'Julia Mandeville,' and

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Melmoth's 'Liberal Opinions,' 'Julia de Roubigné,' and, what we should fancy would be more to the taste of her mind, the 'Letters of Swift.' Before the end of the year she had read 'Village Memoirs,' 'Louisa Mildmay,' and 'Caledonian Bards;' the fruits she does not specify; but Goldsmith's exquisite 'Vicar of Wakefield' was

> "A perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
> Where no crude surfeit reigns."

She returned on the 21st of August to York and her old lodgings; but on the 3rd of September left for Wakefield, and on the 20th went to Doncaster during the races, and at the close of October returned through York to Hull. On the 19th of that month Kemble brought 'Belisarius' with him to Hull, and began that connexion with the York Circuit, which he enjoyed during nearly the whole of his theatrical existence. Hardly a day now passed without a visit from him, and he seems to have felt a sincere affection for Mr. Inchbald. His lively lady he appears always to have treated with equal cordiality and respect; but she has taken care to record, that he never was at any time her *lover*. Wilkinson, on the Waddys leaving him for another engagement, raised the salary of the Inchbalds, and invited them frequently to his house.

Kemble's tragedy was brought out at Hull on the 29th of December, 1778: Mrs. Inchbald acted

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in it, and spoke the Epilogue. She and her husband had now considerably enlarged their visiting circle, and at the close of the year she found herself able to read little more than the newspapers. Dr. Brodie kept up a correspondence with her, and coming through York, on his way to settle in London, he passed the greater part of his time with them. Thus, on the whole, their Yorkshire engagement was productive of every comfort that could reasonably be expected; and the year 1779 saw them rising in stage value, and becoming the centre of a very respectable society not entirely professional, when in the month of June a calamity befel Mrs. Inchbald, which was never repaired, the loss of her excellent husband. On the 4th of June they made an excursion to Halifax with a party (Mr. Inchbald on horseback); as usual with the fraternity, they had an eye to profit in their pleasures, and performed there that evening: the next day they returned home to Leeds, and on the following, suddenly, Mr. Inchbald expired, in consequence of some accident, probably an affection of the heart, which as his lady does not state it, we shall avoid the current rumour, and give merely her own words, as an image of her affliction. She calls the day itself "a day of horror," and the week following, "a week of *grief, horror*, and *almost despair*." If he indeed literally expired in her arms, we shall not

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wonder if the impression of such an event, whenever it crossed her mind, was invariably attended by her tears. That he was the object of her *romantic* love, we have before put at rest; but he had all the best influence of father, brother, counsellor and friend: that she had sometimes given pain by a rather too unweighed indulgence of her vanity, would no doubt be often felt by her, in her hours of retrospection; and all his fondness for her person, and zeal for her professional success, return to her, bitterly regretted, in the periods of her solitary struggle to make her way in the metropolis.

We have before us, in Mr. Kemble's handwriting, the following English inscription, which spoke every thing honorable to his memory in a few plain words:

The Remains of
Joseph Inchbald, Comedian,
lie interred here;
a most worthy man,
who, leaving behind him
a very affectionate wife,
died
in his 44th year,
June 6th,
1779.

Kemble remembered that Barton Booth, like himself a scholar, had honoured the memory of his friend Smith with a Latin inscription; and

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accordingly gave to Mr. Inchbald's fame such extended duration, as a classic language is fondly supposed by the learned only competent to bestow. I think he himself corrected it for the 'Biographia Dramatica.' It is, I firmly believe, conscientiously exact, and happily for his friend every way honorable.

Siste, Viator!
Hic sepeliuntur ossa
Josephi Inchbald, Histrionis,
Qui æqualium suorum
In fictis scenarum facile princeps evasit,
Virtutisque in veris vitæ claruit exemplar.
Procul este, invida Superstitio,
Et mala suadens religionis turbidus
Amor!
Vestris enim ingratiis, hic lapis omnibus
prædicabit
Quòd, in his humi sacræ carceribus,
Vir recti semper tenax,
Sociis charus, in pauperes, pro re, benignus,
Pater optimus, maritus fidelis,
Societatis jurum in cunctis observantissimus,
Otii gaudium, necnon seriorum
ornamentum,
Expectans
De clementiâ Numinis immortalis
Æterna frui felicitate,
Requiescit.
Jos. Inchbald,
Annum agens quadragesimum quartum
Octavo Iduum Junii
Mortem obiit,
Anno MDCCLXXIX.

Our learned friend, Horace Twiss, Esq., Mr.

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Kemble's nephew, at our request supplied the following translation :—

Stay, Traveller!
Here are buried the Remains of
Joseph Inchbald, Comedian:
Unrivalled among his contemporaries
In the fictions of the Stage,
And a bright example of virtue
In the realities of life.
Hence, malignant Superstition,
And evil-counselling Fanaticism!
For, in your despite, this stone shall testify to all
That, in this prison of earth,
A man, ever stedfast in the right,
Dear to his associates, and (for his means) bountiful to the poor,
An excellent father, a faithful husband,
And in all things most observant of the claims of society,
Who lent a charm to leisure and an ornament to study,
Reposes, in confiding hope
To enjoy eternal happiness
Through the mercy of his immortal God!
He died in his 44th year,
On the 6th of June,
1779.

It is honorable to the good people of Leeds, that, though a stone was erected to his memory, and the funeral was conducted with exact propriety, the whole of the charge, by his widow's memorandums, appears to have been under ten pounds. On the 14th of the month a play was performed at Leeds for her benefit, and she agreed to stay in that town with the Cummins's, very good people, and the chief support of the

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York company for many years. Her friends on this occasion were very attentive and solicitous about her, and she met their kindness with grateful sensibility, but like her own Cordelia, she frequently started away "to deal with grief alone," and had the wisdom to combat her melancholy by interesting it in the concerns of others; she read accordingly such books as promised attraction, and probably, too often in vain, tried to wring from her own mind something towards the work which she had nearly completed.

She received letters from her mother and her sister Hunt, and also from George Inchbald, by which she was greatly comforted: he came to Leeds on the 26th of the month, and was a great deal with her: she had a melancholy pleasure in talking to him of his father, and took him to see his grave and tomb-stone. At her solicitation, Mr. Wilkinson engaged him. Being at length in such a state as permitted of personal exertion, she joined the company in an excursion to Pontefract, and occupied at an inn the same chamber as Mrs. Raworth: George Inchbald boarded with them. Kemble lodged in the same house, and, as usual, passed with her all the time he could spare. With him too she could be unreserved in her communications, and she herself minutes down that she asked him many questions concerning Mr. Inchbald's death—no doubt as to the pre-

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disposition that led to so alarming and fatal a result.

Dr. Brodie's attentions seem to have been agreeable to her; as a physician he had formerly recovered her from a dangerous illness, and on the 30th of July she had a letter from him which pleased her so much, that she sent a copy of it to her sister Hunt—We suppose the doctor led her to imagine that he should wish to pass through life in her society, to which now there could be no reasonable bar. It is a feature in her life that she seems to have been much courted by medical men, and in some instances to have felt an interest about them that was in fact violently romantic. But whenever she found, and she always found it, that they meant no more than their own amusement, if indeed they did not hint at *her* dishonour, she was always wise enough, and firm enough, to make her humble apartment a hall of justice, and order the offender into banishment from her presence:

> "The troublous insects lashing from her side,
> Returning still."

The instances are not few of these repentant lovers being sobered into quiet, agreeable friends, frequently enjoying the charm of her society upon such conditions as she was pleased to impose. When a lady's charms lead their admirer to indiscretion, he has an advocate in her

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vanity, that at least breaks his fall. Actresses are more subjected to this species of annoyance than any other class of their sex; perhaps they are seen to have more attraction, and suspected of less rigour, than their sister charmers of the world.

On the 20th of August she quitted Pontefract with the Cummins's, and returned to York and her old lodgings. In September she visited Wakefield and Doncaster again, acting her usual characters, and George Inchbald boarding with her. On the 13th of September she received a letter from Sir John Whitefoord, which led her into one of those correspondences, which, with confidence in herself, she never declined at any period, though her practice should not be pleaded as a precedent. The following week brought her one from Mr. Waylett of a less doubtful character; it inclosed the profile of her deceased husband, and, if like him, presented the best guardian she could hope for. She had now finished her novel, and shown it to George Inchbald, who, probably, was a very modest critic. Mr. Kemble awed by his academic character; but she gave it to his critical inquisition, and he wrote her, at full length, his opinion of her work. Mr. and Mrs. Hitchcock entirely, it seems, approved it; some other friends were favoured with a sight of this new hope; and on the 5th of October, packed in a small box, she sent it off, addressed in London

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to the care of Dr. Brodie, to be offered to the trade for sale, at the same time informing her sister Hunt that she had done so. But she was not doomed to find an easy access to the temple of literary distinction. After some anxious correspondence about it during the rest of the year, she had a letter from Dr. Brodie, covering one from Mr. Stockdale, who, we suppose, was too full already to venture his money upon a publication which was to find or force its way merely by the actual merits of an unknown writer. It was reserved for George Robinson to be her publisher, and, as he was accustomed to be, her *friend* at the same time, twenty years after this failure.

The manager's attention to her was unfailing: George Inchbald's salary was raised at her desire; but she was not contented, and disputed with him as to some character that he wished her to act: he promised an increase of her *own* salary, but the day following she had a fresh dispute; and honest Tate, in explanation, said many very flattering things as to her talents, and, not the least flattering, as it went beyond words, absolutely offered, if she staid another year, to make her salary one guinea and a half per week. This, be it remembered, is the usual first salary in the country. Nor on the scale that prudence can and will live is it insufficient, with the aid of such benefits as good conduct contrives to secure among the gentry of a circuit. Mrs. Inchbald's weekly

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expences were commonly under a pound, though on certain occasions a splendid stage appearance would raise one week perhaps occasionally to the enormous outlay of three pounds. A benefit at either of the principal towns in the circuit produced from ten to fifteen pounds; and, when Mr. Inchbald died, her circumstances were what are commonly called good, and theatrically, perhaps extraordinary. She had £222 Long Annuities, £30 in Consols, and 5*s*. 3*d*. in the Reduced Annuities, besides £128. 12*s*. 6*d*. money in hand.

As to her studies, she read a great deal the latter half of 1779, chiefly to divert her melancholy; and as late in the year as the 9th of December she thought of a plot and began a farce, which she read to her friends as the scenes were composed. Digges advised her to dedicate it to Mr. Colman: but, as to managers, dedication *may* be a result, but is a useless preliminary — they will not swallow the chaff of flattery so very obvious. Digges had, with every body else in the profession or out of it, a high opinion of Colman; indeed the little manager, in 1778, had afforded him an opportunity of displaying his powers, that can but rarely occur, by an alteration of Fletcher's truly British play of 'Bonduca.' The character of Caratach (or, as Mason Latinizes it, Caractacus) was given by him with a picturesque force that nothing in my time approached, till Kemble showed similar power in the very

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different, but equally poetic creations of Octavian and Rolla.

Her friend Kemble now called less frequently upon her than he was wont to do, but seems to have observed her conduct with a strong degree of interest. She had formed an acquaintance with Miss Wilberforce, and this seems to have brought him to her door after a long absence. He was so ceremonious as to say that he came on particular business, but as she was not alone he would call again upon her; he did so on the 15th of December, and sat a long time talking of Miss Wilberforce. We imagine he really cautioned her against precipitate engagements of this kind, which she was prone to form; sometimes repented and broke away from; and at others, as in the case of Mrs. Wells, thought it a point of firmness, as it might be charity, never to desert even the erring subject whom she had gratified with her intimacy.

Such were the leading events of this most momentous year of her existence, which she thus celebrates, with tears, in her pocket-book. "Began this year a happy wife—finished it a wretched widow!"

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CHAPTER VI.

Year 1780—Her conduct greatly admired — Six months a widow— *Dicky Gossip* offers her his hand—No joke either—Suett trusts Kemble with his suit — Differs with Tate Wilkinson — Wishes a town engagement—Goes again to Edinburgh—Receives varieties of attention—some rude—some religious—Dr. Geddes applied to on her account — His admirable letter in reply — Bishop Hay — Quits the York Company 19th September, 1780 — Arrival in London; interview with Mr. Harris — Fletcher and Shakspeare compared—Remarkable features in her provincial course—The Covent-Garden Company when she joined it—The rival Theatre also.

THE year 1780 brought her from Hull to York with the rest of the company on the 12th of January. She lodged at the house of Mr. Tyler, himself a player, and paid twelve shillings per week for her board and lodging. Tyler seems to have accommodated other members of the company at the same time. George Inchbald, Miss Hitchcock, Miss Mills, Mr. Chalmers, either lodged or boarded in his house, and Mrs. Tyler, her landlady, of the same theatre, by activity and obliging manners rendered the society agreeable. She kept up visiting acquaintance with her

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old friends of the company and some respectable inhabitants of the city. She sometimes dined with Mrs. Wilkinson, the *intendante*, as the French call a manager's wife; and such intercourse, with her theatrical duties of study, rehearsal, and performance, besides her efforts to become an authoress, seem to leave her no *idle* time between January and May. However, she had discharged the duties of a wife with so much theatrical applause, that, after allowing her widowed state half a year's contemplation, her hand was again solicited in wedlock; and the reader will laugh, as she did, at the notion of changing her name for that of Suett. But it was actually so, and our facetious friend Dicky Gossip made a serious tender of himself to her acceptance. We believe she at first conceived him to *joke* on the serious subject; but our festive lover had entrusted his passion to the solemn ear of John Philip Kemble himself; and George Inchbald was the "Eyas Musket" who conveyed what Mrs. Malaprop calls the *soft infusion* to the ears of his smiling step-mother. She now found herself a Portia *off* the stage, and repeated from her own part—"While we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door." Mr. Kemble seems to have excited a great deal of her attention just now. He had absented himself, we have no doubt, on principle; he had called upon her, anxious for her reputation; behind the scenes what he said to her she no-

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tices as particular, and upon his going to London and elsewhere he repeats his leave-taking with much feeling, and the expression of his best wishes for her happiness. He seems to have found himself unable to propose, however willing, and sincerely admiring the lady, to have followed an excellent model. Every well-read gentlewoman will remember the not very obscure hints of Sir Charles Grandison, the master-work of Richardson, — "Heaven is my witness that I love not my own soul better than I do Miss Byron: and now what shall I say? Honour bids me, yet honour forbids me; but I cannot be unjust, ungenerous, selfish." Upon his return he again visited, dined with her, explained the part he bore in Mr. Suett's affair, but maintained the same reserve as to any projected union. He returned to Bath on the 19th of April. In the mean time the lady never led any body to believe that she was indifferent upon the subject; and, as she once expressed herself, in language which no affectation prevented *her* plainness from using, "she would have jumped to have him." Those who settle every thing in country towns gave them to each other so heartily, that it seemed like disappointing their patrons to avoid or even defer the union. We think we know that Mr. Kemble could never have borne with the independent turn of her mind; he could never, we are sure, be blindly fond of any woman; and, much as she might have respected him, she had a *humour*

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that demanded as much indulgence as that of her husband at least. Even as friends to the end of their lives, they had frequent differences, looking very like alienation.

Mr. Wilkinson also and she had differences, as was in truth to be expected. She was negociating an engagement, through her friend Wilson, with Mr. Harris, and we fancy Tate knew it as well as she herself did; however, she went to Leeds in the circuit with the Cummins's, and acted all her usual characters very successfully. They who remembered the heavy loss she had there sustained, felt bound that it should be as far as their power went, the only loss. During the stay at Leeds, Mr. Kemble did not often visit her, though he was with the company; but on her quitting it for Edinburgh, he struck a spark or two from his flint to light and hand her into the coach. She describes herself as very unhappy both in her situation and prospects, conceives a plot now and then for a farce, and worked upon it at her leisure.

At Edinburgh she found her old visitor, Mr. Sterling; who was as ready as ever to take up her time and her tea-cup. The gentlemen of Edinburgh paid her very great attention; but she says of a Mr. Monson that his behaviour *surprised* her; this was on Sunday, the 16th of July, when, in a party of pleasure, they visited Rosslyn Castle, and returned home by Dalkeith and Musselburgh. As

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the same Mr. Monson was of a second party on the 27th to Holyrood House, where he dined and drank tea with them, he had an opportunity afforded at all events to put himself right with her. At this time she mentions that Mr. Berkeley of Aberdeen called, "and shocked me a little by his conversation." Sir John Whitefoord was now in correspondence with her. In the race-week she acted every night: she had no benefit, but the manager made her a present of £5. With all the trouble of the applications, and expressions of obligation to friends, she sometimes did not get much more than seven pounds. She paid while at Edinburgh but 8*s*. per week for her lodging. She mentions having been to chapel once, and only once.

It is highly probable that the Catholic friends of this lovely woman began to conceive some alarm at her free course of life, and this neglect of public prayers. The situation of an actress is exposed beyond parallel to temptations of every kind; and one lady in particular thought her case called for friendly intervention. She accordingly addressed herself to Dr. Alex. Geddes, and his reply will merit and repay the attentive perusal which the subject and his name demand.

"MADAM,

"I am very sensibly affected by what you tell me of Mrs. Inchbald, though I hope her

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situation is not quite so dangerous as to you it appears. From the little I know of her, I take her to be a woman of good sense, elegant manners, and gentle disposition; and it would give me great pain to think that her principles, as a Christian and a Catholic, did not entirely correspond with these amiable qualities. It is upon this very favorable idea which I have conceived of Mrs. Inchbald, that I presume she will not take it amiss if I offer her, through your hands, my sentiments of her present state of life, and suggest the most effectual means of weaning her, by degrees, from that state, or making her live in it as becomes a disciple of Jesus Christ.

"I am none of those rigid casuists that deem it impossible for an actress to be a virtuous woman. I think, with St. Francis de Sales, that a *play* is of itself an indifferent thing: I am even inclined to believe, that a well-regulated theatre might become, if not absolutely a school of virtue, at least a source of rational entertainment, and one of the most harmless pastimes which the idle, the gay, and the great can indulge themselves in. At the same time I am fully convinced that, like all other indifferent things, it may be a real source of sin to many individuals; and it is clear that, as often as that happens, these individuals are obliged to relinquish it, as they would be obliged to relinquish any other pastime or employment which from experience they had found capitally hurtful to their

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souls. If then Mrs. Inchbald is conscious to herself that the theatre is, either directly or indirectly, to her the immediate or even remote cause of sin, she is surely too reasonable not to see the necessity of leaving it: but if she has never found it dangerous to her virtue, or incompatible with her Christian duties, I cannot well see that she is under an obligation of quitting it from any natural principle of moral rectitude I am acquainted with. To this perhaps it will be objected, that there are extant church *canons* by which all *players* are excommunicated, and which consequently suppose their *profession* altogether unlawful. I know, Madam, there are such canons; and I know also that these canons are founded on the supposition of the theatre being an unlawful amusement; but, in the first place, it is certain that when these canons were made the theatre was very different from what it is at present; and, secondly, it appears they are considered as obsolete, and not strictly binding, at least in this kingdom. I think I have heard you say that Mrs. Inchbald herself was formerly admitted to the Holy Communion both by the English clergy and Bishop Hay,* which it

* This reference to Bishop Hay was made in the year 1773, by Mrs. Inchbald herself. His answer to a letter from her, which we place here, shows that she had little in a personal interview to dread from that good and moderate Divine :—

"MADAM, "Edinburgh, April 4, 1773.

"The freedom you have taken in writing to me is far from being

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cannot be imagined they would ever have allowed, if they had not looked upon the canons, so often mentioned, as gone into desuetude. Still, therefore, the danger or safety of Mrs. Inchbald's situation must depend on the circumstances that attend it; and, with regard to these, we cannot reasonably refuse her own testimony.

"Hitherto I have supposed that Mrs. Inchbald finds her state not only not detrimental to her virtue, but also compatible with every Christian observance. Now I am afraid this last part of the supposition is not sufficiently grounded; for I learn that she neither attends mass on days of obligation, nor frequents the sacraments at times appointed. This non-observance must certainly be ascribed either to the employments she follows, the dissipations of which have left her no time for serious duty, or to her own tepidity and spiritual sloth, which hinder her to make a proper use of the times and opportunities which her profes-

disagreeable. It is my duty to be always ready when any one wants me for their spiritual concerns. You know the difficulty that those in your way lie under with regard to their Christian duties; but, from the account you give, there seem to be some favorable circumstances in your case. I shall be glad to see you when convenient, either this afternoon, betwixt six and seven, or any time tomorrow, when we can talk over particulars. In the mean time, I remain,

"MADAM,

"Your very humble servant,

"GEO. HAY.

"To Mrs. Inchbald."

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sion allows. In either of these cases her situation is perilous, but surely not desperate. If the first be true, I cannot persuade myself that it will be a difficult matter to convince her of the propriety, expediency, and necessity of relinquishing a state that must in the end prove so fatal to her salvation: if the second, she has only to exert herself a little in the cause of virtue and religion, and shake off that load of habitual indolence that oppresses her, and which will still be accumulating more weight in proportion as she neglects to remove it.

"'My dear Mrs. Inchbald, (would I say to her in such a situation,) you profess yourself a Christian and a Catholic; and a woman of your education cannot be supposed to be ignorant of the duties which that sacred character imposes upon you. If the employment you now follow is incompatible with these duties, abandon it—for thes ake of God, abandon it, and save your soul. But if you say that it is possible to attend to your obligations as a Christian and remain a player, show us that possibility, in the name of Heaven, by a c onformable practice.'

"These, Madam, are the few reflections I have had leisure to make on the subject of our last conference. If they are of any service to Mrs. Inchbald, it will give me infinite pleasure. At any rate they can do no harm; and they give me

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a new opportunity of repeating, what I hope you are fully convinced of, that I ever am,

"Madam,

"Your most obedient humble servant,

"ALEX. GEDDES."

"Boyd's Close, Canongate,
August 7, 1780."

From Edinburgh she returned to her old lodgings and associates at York, and wrote to her sister Hunt, and her friend Mr. Davis, of her intended removal, when her time was up with Wilkinson, from Wakefield, in September, to London. It was at York that she received her engagement at Covent-Garden theatre from Mr. Harris. She had even a double salary at York for some time; but her anxious mind determined her to try the great mart once more, and thus her correspondence with Tate meant but a trial to put him somehow in the wrong, while she really followed her inclination. Kemble called upon her occasionally, as the Lord Townley would, to talk about her "journey to London;" but a Colonel Glover appears to have engaged now more of her attention than any of the train. It appears that their notes circulated briskly; he visited her frequently, and, like a military man, followed her march to Wakefield.

When Dr. Geddes's letter was communicated to her, no where appears: there does not assuredly

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seem the slightest approximation to the tempered course which he recommends to her. She passes all her evenings in the theatre, whether she acts or not; and as to religious exercises, we have only one described, and that in terms somewhat light for the occasion; *e. g.* "Sunday, Sept. 3, Rose late, dressed, and read in the Bible about David, &c." But she was in training for London. On the 19th of September, 1780, she quitted the York company, which had once been the great object of her wishes, and had afforded her that moderate but steady encouragement which had placed her somewhat beforehand with the world. But here, as in most accounts current, her *loss* was to be remembered with her gain; and that, of so good a man as Mr. Inchbald, could not but deprive of their zest the various scenes in which she once enjoyed his professional assistance, and, what was of still higher value, his care of her pecuniary affairs, and the weight they naturally possessed from their combination. In the language of an elegant writer, whoever the writer was, "No calamity can more forcibly affect than the *sudden* death of a friend by whom we *know* that we were beloved. The loss of fortune, or indeed any disaster that affects one's self alone, leaves many resources. There is a moderation to be shown which enables one calmly to bear the suffering, or a noble firmness which raises one above compassion. The natural vanity of the human heart

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will sometimes console us in adversity. Self-admiration is often a powerful comforter, but wholly ineffectual against the stroke which lays one who loved us in the dust. We are then awed by humility. We call to mind the good qualities of the deceased, which brighten as they take their flight; our own shrink from the comparison, and we are ready to inquire why we should be yet favoured with an existence of which they are deprived."

Her arrival in town was, however safe, attended with nothing cheering: she was engaged at a salary less than even Yorkshire afforded her; she had to make her way before a very different and untried audience; and thus with expenses that could not but be greater, an income not only less in amount, but disposably less, there was but one favorable subject even for hope to build upon, namely, that she might procure some attention as an author for the stage on which she was an actress. On the day she arrived she supped with her sister Hunt, who lived in a very humble way with her family, and there talked of her anxiety for an interview with Mr. Harris, for which she waited impatiently until Sunday the 24th, when, probably upon the stage, she went over some of her parts to him, and found herself happy by his decided approbation of Bellario in 'Philaster,' the play in which his former partner Colman had brought out Powell. As a part, Bellario was lifted into enchanting grace by Mrs. Yates; and its prime

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distinction, as to an audience, the wearing of the male habit, suited Mrs. Inchbald exactly, who looked the fond and faithful youth, with a loveliness that could not but interest. Fletcher in this play has committed the stage error (for it is only one *there* where we think more of the performers than the play) that his great leader and rival, Shakspeare, had before done in his 'As You Like It,' we mean informing us of the characters through other mouths than their own; every capable hearer would like to have been present when the wounded stag wept his sorrows in the needless stream, and the melancholy Jaques moralised the spectacle, to have enjoyed his feeling and its expression at first hand. In like manner we regret that we do not accompany Philaster in the chase during which he finds Bellario quenching his thirst at a fountain and repaying the Naiad with his tears, and see him weaving his garland of simple flowers, bred in the bay, into the mystic order that signified his sorrows and struck root in the affections of the prince, whom he coveted to serve, as a still warmer wish could never be gratified. It was settled by the manager that she should commence her town career in that character, and make her bow, not curtsey, to the critics on the 3rd of October.

But before we embark her on this sea of troubles, it may be as well to look back and preserve a few features of her country course, such as we

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consider to have now a sort of antiquarian interest, and bear some curious features of stage history. When she first acted Cordelia to the Lear of her friend Digges, the play-bill, or, as it might be equally well named, show-bill, thus set out that immortal drama:

"King Lear and his three Daughters,
written by Shakespear:
Containing the good old King's division of the Crown between his three daughters—the ambition of the bastard Edmund—the flight and feign'd madness of the virtuous Edgar—the base ingratitude of the old King's two daughters, Goneril and Regan—the piety and virtue of his youngest daughter Cordelia—her love for Edgar—the distress, sorrow and frenzy of the poor King, who was turn'd out in the night to wander by the barbarity of his children—the loyalty of the good Duke of Gloster—the loss of his eyes by the inhuman sentence of Regan's husband—the war raised by Cordelia to restore her unhappy father—their defeat and imprisonment—the old King's sudden restoration, and the just punishment of vice and reward of virtue."

We think this remarkably well done: and to whom would the detail of such a fable not be *ad captandum?* It is not Shakspeare's play, in which poetical and moral justice are equally rejected;

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but then it leaves no impressive horror like the great original, the last scene of which is more *Homeric* than any other, ancient or modern.

To Digges's Lear (very good) Beynon was the Edgar, and Mr. Inchbald, Albany: Mrs. Inchbald then, and constantly, Cordelia. The Gentleman-Usher was acted by Mr. *Death*, who would have figured more in the original play.

We think the reader will like to be informed how Mrs. Inchbald was sustained when in the York company. In 'Tamerlane,' Tate Wilkinson the manager was the Bajazet, and Cummins the Tamerlane to her Aspasia; and, with the appointment *literally* of Destiny, Mr. Oram performed Omar. This was in March, 1778.

On the 24th of August, 1779, at York, [to begin as soon as the *Race* is over] the first of all objects in the mortal course of a Yorkshireman, we have 'King Henry IV. with the Humors of Sir John Falstaff.'—Falstaff, Wilkinson; Prince of Wales, Kemble; Hotspur, Cummins. Lady Percy fell to the lot of Mrs. Inchbald, and her husband, as Poins, attended Kemble in his idleness. A pantomime followed, called 'Harlequin Salamander,' in which Dicky Suett performed the *Clown*.

Lewis was then on the road to fame and fortune, and was announced for the Friday following in some *tragedy;* a better farce still, 'Who's the Dupe,' was at the same time in rehearsal.

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On the 8th of April, 1780, Mrs. Inchbald for the benefit of her step-son, George Inchbald, acted Hamlet, George himself being her Horatio. Suett (a country trick) played both Rosencrantz and the Grave-digger. The joy of the galleries to see him in Goodman Delver's dozen waistcoats, after as an ambassador he had been put to sudden death by the King of England, may be readily conceived.

We will now look at the Covent Garden company on her accession to it. That very masterly actor Henderson was at the head of the company; and she had the pleasure of studying his natural manner on the stage, and became a visitor at his house in Buckingham Street. She was the first Constantia to his Don John in 'The Chances;' Miss Younge was, and merited well to be, the *second:* a very superior part. When, for the first time in town, he acted Wolsey, Mrs. Inchbald's beauty recommended her to Anne Bullen; Miss Younge's Katherine was one of her finest achievements. Mrs. Kennedy sang to her in her dying slumbers. Clarke was King Henry; Wroughton, Buckingham. 'The Spanish Friar,' after a lapse of six years, revived in Henderson, and in him *only*. Wroughton and Lewis were the Torrismond and Lorenzo; Quick, the Gomez; Mrs. Inchbald, the Leonora. Nan Catley was still vocal, and in 'Thomas and Sally,' the farce, by particular de-

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sire, performed Dorcas; Mrs. Martyr, Sally, for the first time.

Richard the Third by Henderson was a very powerful, if not heroic, representation of that assassin. Mrs. Inchbald was the Queen. When the day following he acted King Lear, Miss Younge was his Cordelia, as she had been Garrick's; Lewis, Edgar.

Mrs. Yates performed occasionally, and in 'The Fair Penitent,' Mrs. Inchbald as Lavinia had an opportunity of improving her own Calista. The same opportunity was given to her in 'Measure for Measure,' when Henderson, playing the Duke, Mrs. Yates was the true Isabella to her gentle Mariana. The pantomime at this time, in which poor Mrs. Inchbald was expected to walk, was called 'Harlequin Freemason;' the procession here was of all the Grand Masters, from the *Creation*. No doubt a numerous body, but yet *she* might plead here a Salique exemption.

She readily acted Charlotte in 'The Gamester' to Henderson's Beverley; and the tender sorrows of his wife had the pathos of Miss Younge, and required no more, until Siddons subsequently showed how much had been overlooked, by eyes not so aquiline as her own.

The favourite comedy during her first season was certainly 'The Belles Stratagem,' to which proud distinction many things concurred. "In the first place," says Mrs. Inchbald herself, "when

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she had become a rival authoress, and a critic, the dialogue is very good, abounding in excellent satire, with a most perfect description of the modes and manners of the fashionable world." She goes on to mark the prominent *novelties* of character with suitable praise. The reader, who remembers that she aided Wroughton in the display of Sir George and Lady Frances Touchwood, may like to read her opinion of the characters; thus she expresses it:—"The love of Sir George and his wife is fervent, yet reasonable; they are fond, but not foolish; and with all their extreme delicacy of opinion, never once express their thoughts, either in ranting, affected, or insipid sentences." But there was yet an additional charm, which perhaps balanced the genius of the authoress of the comedy, and the merits of the performers, in the minds of the audiences of those days; it was the compliment uttered by Saville to Queen Charlotte: "Lady Frances was born to be the ornament of courts. She is sufficiently alarmed not to wander beyond the reach of her protector; and from the British court the most tenderly anxious husband could not wish to banish his wife. Bid her keep in her eye the bright example who presides there; the splendour of whose rank yields to the superior lustre of her virtue." Let us add to this praise by one elegant writer, whom we had the honour to know intimately, that, in spite of the changes of opinion, Mrs. Inchbald, to *renchérir*

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on Mrs. Cowley's admiration, thus consecrates the subject of it: "The period of the last twenty-six years has yet preserved one illustrious character, named in this play, free from alteration: and at the present moment, her eulogium is heard in the midst of crowded theatres, with all that glow of veneration and love which heretofore it inspired; and which now, more than ever, becomes due to those virtues, which time has proved to be stedfast."

We have nothing to add but the cast of the play, with Mrs. Inchbald in it, as it was performed, by command of their Majesties, on Monday, November 13, 1780:

Doricourt, Lewis; Sir G. Touchwood, Wroughton; Flutter, Lee Lewes; Saville, by F. Aickin; Villers, Whitfield; Courtall, Robson; Silvertongue, W. Bates; and Hardy, Quick. Lady Touchwood, Mrs. Inchbald; Mrs. Racket, Mrs. Mattocks; Miss Ogle, by Mrs. Morton; and Letitia, Miss Younge. To which, by command, was added Comus, the Lady by Mrs. Inchbald; Euphrosyne by Miss Catley, who sang 'Sweet Echo,' and was sweetly echoed by Braham's master, Leoni.

Pilon now anticipated one of Mrs. Inchbald's subjects for a farce; it was called, after its godfather, the Rev. Mr. Madan; but the infant lived only a single day; we allude to 'Thelyphthora, or More Wives than One.'

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Miss Younge took 'The Belles Stratagem' for her benefit on the 27th of March, 1781, and sought no novelty whatever. Henderson, who followed her on the Saturday, gave the town 'Jane Shore,' in which he for the first time acted Hastings; Miss Younge and Mrs. Yates were the Alicia and Shore. His farce was 'Poor Vulcan,' in which Quick was excessively amusing, which, indeed, he could not very easily avoid being. Mrs. Inchbald, for her friend Lewis's night, played Charles the First's Queen, and *he* figured as the parliamentary General Fairfax. Wroughton, though personally unlike the monarch, sustained the firmness and tenderness of his character with great effect. Henderson, who chose with exact judgment, acted his Sir Giles Overreach this season, and Mrs. Inchbald was his Lady Allworth. As might be expected, she played for every body in the house, and of course for her friend Wilson.

It may be as well to recall what sort of strength Drury-Lane theatre opposed at this time to Covent Garden. Their company had one great advantage, to have been fashioned under so great an artist as Garrick. We will look at them again by the distant glass of memory, as we personally beheld their performance in the season of 1780-81. In Shakspeare's tragedy of 'Macbeth,' Smith (whose Macbeth had been revised by his master) was well supported by Mrs. Crawford in Lady

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Macbeth. But he and she were better suited to the march of Dryden's Muse in 'All for Love:' Antony and Cleopatra were very finely acted by them, and Palmer put sufficient stage-bustle and fire into Ventidius. Congreve perhaps never had more justice done to him; the cast of his 'Love for Love' will prove this: Tattle, King; Valentine, Farren; Sir Sampson, Moody; Scandal, Bensley; Foresight, Parsons; Jeremy, Baddeley; and Ben, Yates: Angelica, Miss Farren; Mrs. Frail, Miss Pope; Mrs. Foresight, Miss Sherry; Miss Prue, Mrs. Abington. Their singers were Vernon, Dubellamy, Bannister, Miss Prudom, Mrs. Wrighten, Sheridan, their great chief, though never inattentive to his fame, now did nothing to extend it. He wrote no more himself, though the Critic said he did; but he did not look after dramatic talent in others, when he could find nothing better than 'The Dissipation' of Miles Peter Andrews to occupy such fine actors as we have enumerated. Even his Prologue and Epilogue were spoken by King and Abington; and, we suppose in compliment to its weakness, the comedy was followed by that most interesting of pantomimes, 'Robinson Crusoe.' Andrews had merely wire-drawn 'Bon Ton' into five acts.

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CHAPTER VII.

First appears in Bellario—Lewis and Mrs. Mattocks, the Philaster and Arethusa—Highly applauded in Angelina—Another suitor, Don Jerome of the Duenna—Letters from Wilson—Lodgings at 9*s.* per week—Her intimates—Dr. Brodie—Mr. Francis Twiss—the Booths—the Whitfields—Her low salary—How this can be called liberal—Harris and his friend—Alarming symptoms as to her health—Her farce on the subject of Polygamy—Walks for her bread in the Pantomime—Dr. Grey sends her into the country—'The Ancient Law' sent to both Harris and Colman—Disagreeable business, too, *on* the stage—Seems not averse to a second marriage—Dr. Brodie rather particular—Goes in male attire to a masquerade—Marquis Carmarthen's calls upon her—Remembered in her "Simple Story"—In June visits Standingfield—Kemble's letter to her about Henderson and Sir Giles Overreach—Returns to town—Holcroft—his life contrasted with Gifford, another shoemaker—Reform, the "Ecce Homo"—Part of Mrs. Inchbald's letter to Mr. Harris.

HAVING announced her first appearance in Bellario at Covent Garden, in the year 1780, and shown something of the strength, to which she was at least a useful accession, we are to look at her reception in town, and the impression it made upon her. She confesses that she felt herself dull. Her kind friend Davis, who lodged in the

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same house with her, brought her the newspapers in the morning following her *début;* and those cautious distributors of fame, that must annoy some established friends, did not entirely assure her doubting mind. But she had not been announced as a star of magnitude, and was content to twinkle in her humble sphere. A few of the features of this performance shall be preserved. Lewis and Mrs. Mattocks were the Philaster and Arethusa. Nothing could be more absurd. Mrs. Mattocks in comedy, however broad, was a striking and valuable actress; she was a counterpart of Lewis; but in tragedy, as *he* supplied the want of pathos by bustle and vehemence, so *she* expressed the passion of love with the most decided extravagance; and as she was never beautiful, it became disgusting. Mrs. Inchbald had but little freedom or grace in her action; she spoke, too, rather timidly than affectionately—rather emphatic than natural. Perhaps from embarrassment as to her hair, she kept her page's hat *on*, even when presented to the Princess; and all through, except in the wood-scene, where propriety might have let it remain, until forcibly thrown off. The remembrance of Mrs. Yates was too strong for her best effort; that lady was still on the stage, though the majesty of her figure disqualified her for the page. The play should not have been done at all, unless another Powell had started and brought genuine *pathos* along with him; then

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he might have sustained such a Bellario. 'Tom Thumb,' on this occasion, commenced his lasting reign. She does not say any thing of her efforts, until she mentions Angelina in 'The Fop's Fortune.' In this lovely part she was highly complimented. Mr. Harris himself saw her performance, and it was the first time of his seeing her act. Thus a little fortified, she opened her battery upon the manager as a writer of farce, and Wilson seconded her with friendly zeal. The letters she received sometimes raised her hopes, and at others drove her to despair. When urging her suit to Mr. Harris, he "played the orator, as if himself might wear the golden prize:" and this was discovered, in fact, to be within the range of his speculation; for at length, on the 20th of December, 1780, Wilson wrote to Mrs. Inchbald the following proposal of marriage:—

"DEAR MADAM,

"I most earnestly intreat you will not take offence at my addressing you on a subject upon which my happiness so materially depends; as it is a matter I have well considered, before I could gather courage, I hope I shall not offend you by saying I sincerely love you, and will by a uniformity of conduct convince you how much I am attached to you. I have a great many faults, not one of which but is easily erased. I have unfortunately been acquainted with ladies who

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have had as many faults as myself, therefore a reform there was not to be expected: with you, should I ever be so happy, I would be every thing you could wish me; my conduct, in every respect, should be framed to your wish; my whole life should be devoted to render you happy. For God's sake, whatever is my doom, do not let me lose your friendship. Honour me so far as to let me know my fate as early as possible: a state of suspense is of all states the most miserable. I know your prudence will not suffer you rashly to enter on a second marriage, without minutely deliberating on the consequences. Give me but leave to speak to you on this subject, and I shall then hope, by time, to convince you it is my wish to do every thing that can render me worthy your attention. I am, sincerely,

"Your devoted friend and well-wisher,

(Signed) "Rd. Wilson."

"Wednesday morning, 10 o'clock.
No. 15, King Street, Soho." [20th Dec., 1780.]

To this letter, without even the delay he must have looked for, she returned one of those decisive rejections which showed that she did not balance about the offer; and speaks of "her own temper as so uncertain, that nothing but blind affection in the husband could bear with it." This requisite honest Dick was as little likely to bring, as any man acquainted with a town life. His

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anxiety appears to have driven him out very early in the morning, or, for a lover, sent him home rather late. However, his rejoinder is perfectly agreeable to the forms in such cases made and provided, and we give it verbatim:—

"DEAR MADAM,

"I hope you will believe me, when I assure you I had a very uncomfortable night, in consequence of the letter I sent you. I was out this morning before your answer came; I returned at eleven and found it. So far from alleviating my passion, it has increased it: your letter breathes the spirit of virtue and good sense, and makes me more conscious of your inestimable worth. You say, 'your temper is uncertain, and that nothing but a blind affection could bear with it.' I think the man that is honoured with your hand must be totally blind to his own happiness, if he could not overlook and humour an infirmity of that kind, to secure so many lasting virtues. I will allow the loss of a worthy, loving, and attentive husband, is not soon to be reconciled to a lady who thinks and feels with that goodness of heart that you do; and that the hazard in venturing on a second is great. I will confess, that I have not conducted myself through life with that degree of prudence and discretion, that your late worthy husband did; but this I will be bold to say, that my *heart* is good; so is my temper.

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I feel with you I could be every thing you would wish to mould me to, and know no pleasure without you. Only give me leave (in hopes your present sentiments may remove) to convince you, your friends, and the world, in time, by my deportment, that I have no wish on earth but what is centred in you. As to worldly matters I will not presume to enter on that subject, till I dare flatter myself with the *smallest* part of your esteem: that once gained, I will venture to say I never will forfeit it. Believe me anxious to do every thing in my power to render your life happy, and that I am, with sincerity,

"Your real friend and devoted servant,

"R. W."

"Thursday. No. 15, King Street."

The lady, we believe, never in her life left a letter unanswered. She was fond of this exercise of the pen, and indeed, like the Carters and the Montagu's, used it in a masterly way. Her lover seems to have been repelled within the lines of friendship; indeed, with such a woman, a very desirable position. On the 25th of December, he sends her his best wishes, accompanied by a present that spoke his respect for her understanding. She never bought books, and her friends were happy at all times to put the materials of study before her. Few women have ever known the history of her country so well as Mrs. Inch-

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bald. Her abridgement of a great portion of it now lies before me; not written, as it should seem, with any view beyond the indelible impression of its leading facts upon her memory. Thus he writes:—

"DEAR MADAM,

"I have sent you the 'History of England;' and have troubled you with this for no other reason than—to wish you a merry Christmas; a happy new year—a great many of them; that you may be married before this day twelve months; that I may have the choosing of your husband—it would be a difficult matter to find a *good one*, but I think I could find one that loves you dearly. *This is all in friendship;* and I am, most sincerely,

"Your devoted humble servant,

"R. W."

"Dec. 25, 1780."

During this year she resided with a Mrs. Barwell, and paid 9*s.* per week for her apartments; and as she always knew how either to give some pleasant property to her abode, or by her personal charm to render it of no moment whatever,—at such lodgings she received visits from the Marquis of Carmarthen, who was greatly pleased with her conversation. Among her intimates may now be numbered Mr. and Mrs. Booth—Mr. and Mrs. Whitfield, who became her closest friends, and at

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whose house she commenced a very valuable acquaintance with that excellent and studious man, the late Francis Twiss, Esq., who became a brother-in-law to the Kemble family. Dr. Brodie occasionally called and took his tea with her; and one of her rejected swains, Suett, came to announce his approaching marriage.

We have seen the line of business she supported in the theatre. Her salary for it, was £1. 6*s*. 8*d*. per week, till the 28th of October, from which day to the end of the year she had £2— with the necessity of working steadily at her dresses, to keep up to the splendour or the fashion of the characters she represented. It is not very unreasonable in a lady like Mrs. Inchbald, if she represent to a manager that these are hard conditions. She is no novice, who comes there to learn her profession, such as we have seen by shoals in the present day, and who really ought to pay rather than be paid; but had acted in theatres of the highest respectability, and with performers of either sex, who (whether they had played before the King or not) were fully equal to any under the management of the London patentees, whatever they might conceive of we know not what taste and refinement demanded by the spectators of the Capital. Harris had little argument against her plea of *quantum meruit*. What he had we shall see reflected by Wilson, in a letter which shall follow these remarks; no

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other than this, that "if she had a low salary, she did high business; and could not be paid in consequence and money too." What is this but saying—"I must have paid a greater price for the work, if any other performer had done it? It is to me a saving, and you may beggar yourself if you will, or walk in pantomime with the raff of the theatre; when your full salary of Two pounds, or perhaps Three, shall be liberally conceded."

Wilson had been attentive to her interests; and, during a long ride in the manager's company, had brought up the subject of her farce, still in his hands. He sends her, at her desire, a book of the Covent-Garden Fund, and reserves the remarks of Mr. Harris for a call he intended the following day to make upon her. The letter above mentioned could have been at no great distance, and shows the fascination of riding with a manager, if he has satisfied at least his companion:—

"DEAR MADAM,

"Your favour sent by the post, I did not receive till yesterday afternoon. As you have honoured me so far as to subscribe yourself my friend—from the friendship I bear you, I shall not doubt but you will forgive me if I act the part of a friend, and offer you my advice; though, at the same time, I am conscious you do not stand in need of it: there is no doubt of your conducting

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yourself with propriety in every situation. I am sorry Mr. Harris attempted to send you a character that you must, in justice to yourself, refuse. I would wish you to be *particular* in the mode of refusing it. Remember, my dear Madam, how ardently you wished for London! what flattering reasons you have to wish to continue in it! You have had, in your theatrical situation, every thing you could wish for, but *money;* but then you have got possession of characters that will hereafter demand money. Whatever is the dispute, treat with no *deputies*. See Mr. Harris—reason with him; he is ever ready to redress grievances, when the parties make their own complaint: if it come through any other channel, circumstances are not always properly related; and, too frequently, advice is given before the manager has time to form his own judgment. I hope to God it will terminate to your entire satisfaction.

"It is impossible to pass through life without some rubs; but surely there is a pleasing consolation in having a companion who will partake in your distress, soothe you, and make disappointment light. I must beg leave to say, notwithstanding your injunction, that had I the good fortune to call you mine, you should remain no longer on the stage than the stage had charms for you; nor should my joys be cropped by the arbitrary dictates of a theatrical monarch. You request I will drop the subject; that to persevere in it will give you the greatest uneasiness. I will

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in that, as I would in every thing else, comply; for the world I would not do any thing to offend you. Though I have not your permission to talk of love, I hope I shall ever have leave to speak with the sincerity and freedom of a friend: confirm me in your friendship, and you will find I am, and ever will be, sincerely anxious for your welfare. I subscribe myself your true friend and faithful servant, R. W."

"Saturday morning.
No. 15, King Street." [No date.]

Wilson was perfectly right in his counsel that she should always talk with Mr. Harris himself. The truth is, there was a very mischievous old crab about him, who, by professions of the most unbounded admiration for his honorable character, had a great deal too much influence upon his conduct. This *Pococurante*[1] nothing on the stage could possibly please, and he secured his judgment from impeachment by being uniformly unfavorable; for he knew a time must arrive to the *best*, when, novelty being gone, indifference ensues; and he *then* used to exclaim triumphantly, "I told you from the first what he, she, or it would turn out." We shall, in its proper place, give Mrs. Inchbald's own remarks upon the gentleman, from an extract of her letter to Mr. Harris, in her own hand-writing.

She continued to improve herself by general

[1] *Pococurante* is a character in Voltaire's 'Candide,' whom nothing satisfies.

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reading; and, in the course of the year 1780, studied attentively the works of Pope, diverging from his poem to the translated letters of Abelard and Eloisa. Garrick's Life by Davies was a professional lecture, which gave her both pleasure and profit. She travelled also with Thomson, whose work was then recent,

> "While fancy, like the finger of a clock,
> Ran the great circle, and was still at home."

The year 1781 showed rather alarming symptoms as to her health, and she attended daily, at his house, Dr. Grey the physician, for nearly a fortnight. The good doctor seems to have declined any thing like fees from this beautiful and interesting woman. By his recommendation she borrowed from the stage a week in the month of April to visit her mother at Standingfield. Previously to this, and one great cause of it, was the excessive trouble she had as to her theatrical writings, and the getting them either received by the manager or returned. In December she began a farce upon the subject of Polygamy; on this she worked assiduously the following month, and on the 13th of February sent it to Mr. Harris. On the 18th she had an interview with him, and was, as usual, turned round; and it was not till the 6th of March, after many calls, and more notes, that she succeeded in having all her three farces in her own possession. One of them, 'The Ancient Law,' she sent to Mr.

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Colman, the *spes altera Romæ*, on the following day; he kept it a week, and returned it with an unfavorable sentence. We are apt to conjecture that this was a *farcical* treatment of the subject already handled by Massinger and others, and by them called 'The Old Law,' *e. g.* that there should be no "long withering out a young man's revenue;" but that every man at four-score, and woman at three-score, if found living, should be put to death; becase, being useless either in counsel or generation, they filled a place "which would be better supplied when they had made it empty."

With the hints already before him, the reader will not suppose that her employment on the stage was rendered peculiarly gratifying to her. Of the pleasing, she had only Lady Frances Touchwood, which she acted about twice a month. Of the distressing, she had to walk in the pantomime, or forfeit a great part of her salary. It should however be remembered, that in a new comedy called 'The World As It Goes,' by Mrs. Cowley, she was complimented by a part called Sidney *Grubb*, but had no chance whatever of becoming a *butterfly;* for the play being condemned the first night, and also when tried again under the title of 'Second Thoughts Are Best,' Miss *Grubb* never survived to her *chrysalis* state.

Her salary was thus regulated by the Lords of the Theatrical Treasury: £2. for the first week of

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the year, and afterwards £3. till the 27th of February, on account of walking in the pantomime, which then becoming but *Lenten* entertainment, and intermitted by Oratorios twice a week, she was cut down at first 10*s*., and subsequently £1., till on the 21st of April she rose once more to the full pay of £3., and so continued to the end of the season. As, however pious, she was never musical, and was really not paid for *sitting* as well as walking, she might on these melancholy evenings have seen her friends out of the theatre; but Palmer, the Bath manager, being in town, and consequently in the play-house, (as is usual in the profession,) Mrs. Inchbald sat in the same box with him, and liked him excessively; as she would have gladly in her discontent visited Bath under his auspices: but she probably did not know of the close intimacy which existed between him and Mr. Harris, and that nothing but a wish, or at least the consent of the latter, could have made the transfer.

Mrs. Inchbald, though she could laugh at the serious addresses of Suett, and very steadily decline those of Wilson, seems not to have any repugnance to a second hymen, provided it elevated her condition in life, and the person was a gentleman agreeable in his manners. Among that description her friend Dr. Brodie stood the foremost, while she thought he meant to offer her his hand; but on a slight surmise that he did but trifle, she

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returned him all his *presents* on the 2nd of February. The month following, the *frost* broke up; he came again as usual, and, through the whole of April, either called daily, or breakfasted, dined, or supped with her; she is careful to add—often at his *own* expense. In May he dropped off by degrees, and at the close was no longer visible. Her more humble friend, Davis, returned for a week to his lodgings in the same house with her; during this time she dined once in his company, and supped each night with him and her landlady. She is careful to put down, that once in this winter she went to a masquerade. As a frolic, she, who had acted Bellario on the public stage, as every other fine woman in the profession had done, probably appeared there in the male habit; for she was outrageously assailed on this subject, and charged with having captivated the affections of sundry witless admirers of her own sex. It reminded her of the beautiful equivoque in the character of Viola:

> "Fortune forbid my outside have not charm'd her!
> She made good view of me; indeed, so much,
> That, sure, methought her eyes had lost her tongue.
> I am the man!—If it be so, (as 'tis,)
> Poor lady, she were better love a dream."
>
> TWELFTH NIGHT.

We are decidedly of opinion that her reflections upon this frolic of her *real life* suggested the incident in her 'Simple Story,' which the reader

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will find in the twenty-sixth chapter of the first volume. There, at the hazard of losing Dorriforth for ever, the heroine, Miss Milner, dresses herself as the goddess *Diana;* and the buskins of the huntress make an ignorant domestic assert that she went to the masquerade in *male attire.* From the knowledge she has supplied of her progress and feelings through life, the instances are abundant in which Miss Milner may be said to be fashioned out of the indiscretions with which the fair authoress's judgment reproaches her own inequality of temper, and pertinacious adherence to her self-will.

If the Marquis of Carmarthen attended her to the masquerade, of which we entertain no doubt, he is the companion whom her *assailant* chose to speak of in terms that were sufficiently alarming; for she notices that "her sister said much against her seeing the Marquis." She wrote to him occasionally, but his visits produced more chagrin than profit; and indeed such things alarm and deter men of inferior rank, whose attentions might be really honorable, and who made no sacrifice if they took as a *wife* a lady of singular vivacity, and yet unquestionable reputation.

The Whitfields, her most intimate acquaintance in the profession, took her to dine with their friend Mr. Babb, for the first time, at his country-house, on Sunday the 6th of May: he became her very steady and valuable friend. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis

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saw her frequently; and Pope visited, who might be said to be on the look-out among the charmers of the stage. That dear and lovely innocent, Miss Satchel, courted her assiduously—the only *real* Polly of 'The Beggars Opera,' and whose tears *filtered* through the very stones of Newgate. This and the Lucy of Nan Catley were contrasted exhibitions, but of equal value, and remain, to the present hour of *scientific* song, unapproached and unapproachable. Wroughton, her Sir George Touchwood on the stage, was not inattentive to other *calls* than those of the prompt boy. His admiration was always worth having. Few men have ever lived with more of the public regard. Never important, nor obtrusive, but at all times sensible, impressive, and natural, he was one of the most useful actors that we have ever seen.

The season of 1780-1 having come to its close, Mrs. Inchbald, on the evening of the 6th of June, set off in the stage for her mother's residence at Standingfield. The good lady was then in the management of a small farm, with the aid of a Mr. Webb. At this time Mrs. James Hunt was the only member of the family residing with their mother. Sir Thomas Gage and his family resided at Coldham, whither the Catholic chapel drew the surrounding families of that communion; and he seems to have taken great interest in the Simpsons. George and his wife lived near his respected parent, and her daughter Bigsby and her husband

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were also in the neighbourhood, where for three months Mrs. Inchbald found herself in the quiet, if monotonous, enjoyment "of rural life, in moral leisure pass'd." She now attended divine service pretty regularly, which in London was omitted altogether, and seems to have revived those religious impressions,

> "Which in the various bustle of resort
> Were all to ruffled, and sometimes impair'd."

But *fate* had decided that she should write comedy; though *Jupiter* Harris had refused that ratifying nod, which Homer has made so essential to the designs of his epic heroes. And though her serious duties are here registered with complacent zeal, we find, on the 26th of June, that she had just conceived a thought for a comedy, and began to write upon it. Whilst she was thus happily retired, her old friend John Philip Kemble, being engaged upon 'The New Way to pay Old Debts,' recollected that Mrs. Inchbald had acted Lady Allworth with that amazing Sir Giles Overreach, Henderson, and accordingly wrote the following letter on the subject, which came to her at Standingfield :—

"Leeds, June 26, 1781.

"MADAM,

"I take the liberty of writing to ask you a few questions relative to the character of *Sir Giles Overreach:* Mr. Wilkinson obliges me to

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play it. Mr. Henderson's performance is in every body's mouth, and the people hereabouts are inclined to do me the honour of expecting I shall make a figure in it. Perhaps Mr. Hitchcock may have told you I am leaving my Yorkshire friends —'tis true; and as I don't wish to lose, in my very exit, the little credit I may have gained in the *long scene* I have played before them, I would learn every mark of character in the body and mind of this villain, that I may bring him off as successfully as I possibly can. What kind of hat does Mr. Henderson wear? what kind of wig—of cravat—of ruffles—of clothes—of stockings, with or without embroidered clocks?—square or round-toed shoes? I shall be uneasy if I have not an idea of his dress, even to the shape of his buckles, and what rings he wears on his hands. Moroseness and cruelty seem to me the groundwork of this monstrous figure; but I am at a loss to know whether, in copying it, I should draw the lines that express his courtesy to Lord Lovell with an exaggerated or mere natural strength? Will you take the pains to inform me in what particular points Mr. Henderson chiefly excelled, and in what manner he executed them? The printed direction for the actor, and the words of the play itself in *Sir Giles's* last speech, puzzle me very much. The margin says, "flourishing his sword;" and the part proceeds thus:—

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'Ha, I am feeble!
Some undone widow sits upon my arm
And takes away the use on't; and my sword,
Glued to my scabbard with wrong'd orphans' tears,
Will not be drawn.'

I beg you will explain this passage to me.[1]

"I am desiring you to impose a very tedious task on yourself. If I knew how, I would apologise for the unreasonableness of my requests. I can only say, and say it with the utmost sincerity, if it ever be in my power to serve and oblige you, the very high esteem I have for you will make the executing your commands the first pleasure of my life. I have the honor to assure you, that I shall always be your true friend and servant,

"J. P. KEMBLE."

[1] We did not, from Mr. Kemble's language, at first perceive his difficulty; as a man may at first "flourish a sword" *in* the scabbard, which he afterwards finds cannot be *drawn* from it; but the other day, in perusing Dr. Ireland's general character of Massinger, we had no doubt that our late friend had been staggered also by the incongruity which that able critic thus points out:—

"When imprecations are used against Richard, and guilty fear is to deprive him of the power of wielding his sword, we feel that the thought is natural. But when Overreach (*New Way to pay Old Debts*) finds that the curses of those whom he has undone are upon him, and take away his strength, we perceive an incongruity. A sword was the natural and proper weapon of Richard—the instrument by which his situation was to be maintained. Overreach has a sword never intended to be drawn: he endeavours to use it in the moment of frenzy; yet talks of its failure in the terms of a baffled soldier, as if it would no longer avenge his cause, or preserve his falling fortunes."—GIFFORD'S MASSINGER, Vol. iv. p. 585.

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One cannot but regret the loss of Mrs. Inchbald's reply to this letter; she was so competent to answer all these minute questions by having acted with him. But as the present writer saw them together upon the stage, and had a sincere regard for the great actor, and admired his Sir Giles beyond that of all his followers, it may perhaps be as well to record the features of the performance. As to dress, Henderson seldom cared much about it; he could *inform* any clothing with the vital character and passion. Kemble might have answered his own question as to Lord Lovell, by reflecting that mere natural strength cannot be the expression of *his* courtesy, who, but from villany, is never courteous. The want of the habit insures *exaggeration*, in him who assumes the feeling. Of his points, it is best to put down those of which other actors make so little. One of the chief was the kindling joy, which at last glowed like furnace, as he spoke these lines, after having in fancy given his daughter to Lord Lovell:—

"Farewell!—Now all's cock-sure:
Methinks I hear already knights and ladies
Say, Sir Giles Overreach, how is it with
Your *honorable daughter?* has her *honour*
Slept well to-night? or, will her *honour* please
To accept this monkey, dog, or paraqueto,
(This is state in ladies,) or my eldest son
To be her page, and wait upon her trencher?
My ends, my ends are compass'd!—then for Wellborn

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And the lands; were he once married to the widow—
I have him *here*—I can scarce *contain* myself,
I am so full of joy—nay, joy all over!"

As far as Massinger is concerned, it is some of the finest writing in the world, for it contains only the *veræ voces* of the character; and its secondary charm is, that the audience enjoy the assured *defeat*, at the triumphant moment of imagined *victory*. Kemble looked at Sir Giles with the eye of a *tragedian;* the groundwork of the monster seemed to him *moroseness* and *cruelty:* he mistook; these obtain only as means to ends; he is not avaricious and ambitious, because he is morose and cruel; but ill-tempered and hard, because he will have no *lenity* in the way to check the attainment of his object. Hear himself in the second act:—

"I would be *worldy* wise; for the other wisdom,
That does prescribe us a well-govern'd life,
And to do right to others as ourselves,
I value not an atom."

and the unblushing avowal to Wellborn afterwards:

"We worldly men, when we see friends, and kinsmen,
Past hope, sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand
To lift them up, but rather set our feet
Upon their heads, to press them to the bottom:
As, I must yield, with you I practised it;
But now I see you in a way to rise,
I can and will assist you."

Henderson was too wise to act a "serpent-like *malignity*" in this avowal. Circumstances, of *course*, made all the difference. Henderson's great

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happiness in all these exhibitions was, that he was as much a *comedian* as a tragedian; or rather, that he considered Man, as a *variable* being, in whatever rank elated by success, and irritated by miscarriage; and any *imperial* exhibitions of him, void of this mixture, as artificial and unnatural—in life itself a mere state-assumption, and on the stage, bombastic and laughable.

The stage direction which puzzled Kemble, Gifford subsequently printed thus—[Flourishing his sword *sheathed*]. Before him, Massinger was in a sad state.

With all submission to such as "skir the country round" in the three summer months, we cannot but be of opinion, that this interval afforded by the London patentees, with a little providence during the winter, might be far better passed by the great actors in a quiet attention to their health, their studies, or their reflections, if you will, than in that insatiate whirl through the provinces, as stars from the Capital, to draw the town apes in the country to attend solely to *them*, and make them up purses of £100 for a single week, while the first performer of the regular company does the work of the season at a weekly salary of thirty shillings.

Mrs. Inchbald, on the 10th of September, roused by the note of preparation from the stage-manager of Covent Garden, left Standingfield in a post-chaise, with her brother George Simpson

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and his wife, who were going to make a short stay in London: they dined and supped at Colchester with their acquaintance of the Norwich company; but on the 12th, she found herself in her former lodgings, at Mrs. Barwell's, for which she paid 10*s.* 6*d.* per week. Till the end of the month she visited and was visited by her brother and sister; nor was she allowed to live *en solitaire* a single day, for the Whitfields were urgent of their claim upon her; and Mr. Twiss, one of the best men of his time, was fond of calling upon her, and imparting his well-regulated mind, as either a friend or a critic. At the theatre, 'The Belles Stratagem' kept its attraction, and her Lady Touchwood continued its soft lustre by the side of the forcible and forcing captivations of Miss Younge's Letitia Hardy. In October 'The pantomime was resumed, and she walked in it nightly, not for her health, but her salary of £3 per week, which was punctually paid (for then there was no mendicancy in the concern). November afforded her almost entire rest; for Jephson's 'Count of Narbonne' succeeded so greatly, as even to suspend the pantomime itself (if indeed that was not rather done to enable the house to give undivided attention to a new one). The 'Count of Narbonne' was a tragedy burst out from the Gothic castle of Romance. The genius of Otranto had in himself the true nerve of tragedy; and Jephson had a delightful and an easy task to

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clothe the sentiments of Walpole in mellifluous verse. Perhaps the author of the romance, had he himself composed the play, might have brought them somewhat nearer to each other. However, it is extremely well done; and we believe Walpole said so. It was astonishingly acted; Miss Younge, Miss Satchel, Henderson, Wroughton, Lewis, left nothing either to be wished, or *surpassed*, even by the great people who succeeded them in their respective characters.

It has been already noticed that our heroine in her theatrical career had been acquainted with Holcroft, at that time willing to believe himself an actor. On many accounts, he was one of the most extraordinary men of the last century. His father was a shoemaker in this town, and taught the son to aid him in his business. The transition was easy: from the boot to the stirrup is but a step; and when quite a boy, he rode his master Mr. Vernon's matches at Newmarket. Yet he did not relinquish the *last*, until he attained the *ripe* age of twenty-five, when he took it into his head to try to become an actor. It is some sanction of this wild notion, that both Foote and Macklin encouraged him to persevere. Macklin hinted at the wonders of his own power as a teacher, and carried off the young actor with him to Dublin, where he might begin to distrust the confidence of his teacher: he certainly regretted the experiment; yet I know not whether his short settlement upon

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the stage as an actor might not have familiarised him to stage effect, and the established course of dialogue, and lessened his labour as a dramatic writer. Something of his master, Macklin, remained in his notions of acting as an art: he used to endeavour to make an actor stand and walk, like a man *off* the stage; and the usual song of declamation he despised and laughed at. Under not very favorable auspices therefore, known (if at all known to be an author) only as having published 'Alwyn, or the Gentleman Comedian,' the year before, Mr. Holcroft brought out his first comedy, called 'Duplicity,' this season at Covent Garden; and it was acted, says Mrs. Inchbald, seven times. The press, at this time, as if they had never heard of Murphy's dealings with the French theatre, fired away daily accusations of plagiarism, charged him with having plundered DESTOUCHES before he had read him, and refused him even a slight liberty with Beau Nash, who had taken so many liberties with all mankind. Slight as the success of 'Duplicity' might be, it inspired Holcroft with the resolution to quit the boards himself, or only appear on them by deputy. Unconquerable perseverance made him the author of something very like *forty* dramatic pieces; made him well acquainted with the modern languages, from all of which he translated; —a writer of Romance, of Politics, of History; occupying no slight space in the public eye at any

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time, and in 1794 submitting, without necessity, to stand a trial with Horne Tooke, Hardy, and others, for high treason. He undertook in 1799, 1800, and 1801, to make himself personally known to those who shared his opinions in Germany and France; and his observations on this tour extended through two quartos. If little Northcote bestowed, as he imagined, a thousand years upon the fame of Godwin, by painting his portrait, Opie might say (though *he* never would say such a thing), "I have preserved Holcroft's countenance as long." It is absolute identity, whoever now may have it.

Incidentally it may be worth remembering, for the train of reflections which must follow, that the late William Gifford and Thomas Holcroft both started from the same profession of *shoemaker*, and both became distinguished literary characters: they were of opposite sides in politics; one a man of uncertain application, the other a prodigy of labour. They were equally free from excesses of every kind, except perhaps those of party zeal. One was a thorough supporter of Government, the other a reformer in both Church and State. We will not imagine but that they were equally *honest*. Gifford wrote little, and acquired a fortune. Holcroft really composed a library, and did not leave, we believe, his funeral expenses. But on this subject we shall rather quote than discuss; and a sentence from the Philosopher of Wimbledon will

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be sufficient. "I tremble at the very name of Reform. The Scotch and English lawyer in conjunction, with both the Indies in their patronage, point to the *Ecce Homo* with a sneer; and insultingly bid us—'Behold the fate of a Reformer!'" —*Diversions of Purley*, Vol. II. p. 486.

To return to Mrs. Inchbald. The great object of either actor or actress is to be constantly in the public eye, and very few of their list can therefore venture to refuse such parts as may be offered to their acceptance. Except Mrs. Cowley, there was really very little dramatic talent just then stirring in comedy; and, having done all that was in her power to sustain 'Duplicity,' Mrs. Inchbald next fell into the hands of 'The Banditti, or Love's Labyrinth,' a comic opera, by O'Keeffe. The music was by Doctor Arnold, and much too good to be lost. The author submitted to be condemned till the next year, when it succeeded so greatly as 'The Castle of Andalusia,' that few pieces ever brought more money into a theatre.

The pantomime usually prepared for the Christmas holidays embittered all the compliments of the season to Mrs. Inchbald. The entries in her diary express her horror at walking in it. "On the 17th December, at the rehearsal of a pantomime. Mr. Harris spoke to me concerning it. On the 19th called to the pantomime, but did not go: 20th, heard that I was forfeited for not attending the call. Agreed to contract with Mr. Wilson,

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(some country speculation perhaps): 22nd, did not call on Mr. Harris, as I intended. On the 24th, sat in a box at the rehearsal of the pantomime: in the evening, writing to Mr. Harris."

Part of her letter to the manager she has preserved. He had been told that she ridiculed him. Hear her frank explanation, and description of the crabbed counsellor before alluded to.

"Mr. ——, unprovoked, first takes an opportunity to say, 'Every actor or actress there is an object of ridicule—is fit only for *York*—would do very well at *York*, &c.' He says *I* am only fit for Queen Sheba; mimicks my stuttering; and says he told Mr. Harris, the first night I played, that I was not worth a farthing, and he was *taken in*. I replied that was impossible, alluded to the salary, &c. &c. He said, the moment my mouth opened, he called to the people that were with him, 'There—I told your how it was!' He tells me that my 'salary is so much given away.' Says, 'he read my 'Polygamy;' it was indecent, and not a word spelt right.' These things (pleasant man!) he declares publicly. I forgive him, because I think he is joking; and, in the same manner, think *he* will not be offended if I joke with him. But I have sometimes found the contrary, and then have begged his pardon, and he has promised to *think no more of it:* but, I believe he has often broke that promise, for I challenge the whole world to say that I ever spoke dis-

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respectfully of Mr. Harris to any soul living but to him; and then I was urged to it, by being first provoked by himself. Perceiving, after our first or second conversation, that nothing but turning his beloved friend into ridicule could draw his attention from making *me* the object of *his*, I used *you*, but as a defensive weapon. I confess my obligations to you. And had you never *wantonly* made me unhappy, by business you forced me to do, purely to show your power, and make the poor piece of bread you gave me bitter to me, your name, even in sport, should have been spared."

How this was read, or *spelt* by one of the two friends, nobody we suppose will care; but Harris was not without feeling as a gentleman, to correct the occasional harshness of management. Besides, he did not look at her as *he* afterwards did, and as we shall long do, as a lady able to invent the 'Simple Story,' and to contest the palm of novel-writing, with even the most accomplished of her countrywomen. The exterior garb of her candidate farces, ragged paper, rude penmanship, and careless orthography, was not at all prophetic of a Dramatic Muse, who should become one of the best supports of comedy, and rank with Centlivre and Cowley.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Exercises herself in the pantomime as usual—Her friend Wilson discharged—Tries to get to Bath—Turns out her lover, Dr. Brodie—Her mind almost entirely philosophic—Slander as to herself and Harris—Mr. Pratt solicits her friendship—Engages with Colman in the summer; and, discharging her sitting-room, reduces her rent to 3*s.* 6*d.* per week—Colman gave her Thirty Shillings salary — Harlequin Teague — In September doubles her rent—Her sister Dolly writes to her about their mother —Her affectionate and admirable reply Makes an engagement with Daly—Acts at Shrewsbury—Journey with Hitchcock—They arrive in Dublin, where she meets Kemble in high favour —Daly engages Mrs. Siddons after the Drury-Lane season—Kemble evidently a favourite with Mrs. Inchbald; his honour and prudence—Daly her lover, as usual with him; foiled here, and exasperated of course—Buys her benefit—Kemble brings her guineas for the amount—She embarks for England—Appears on the Haymarket stage without powder — Theatrical degrees of virtue, a *scrap* of Mrs. Inchbald's own writing — Description of her person by an amateur—August, 1783, Kemble arrives in town—Her friend Davis in difficulties; pays him £43. 8*s.*—Discouraged as a writer, she studies the harder.

We have spoken on the subject of pantomime, not gravely, for it is hard to write upon such trash, even while we run after it. The child sel-

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dom grows entirely out of his early habits. *C'est que l'homme est toujours enfant.* The manager of a theatre, however, looks at Pantomime as the grand source of emolument; and so entirely is this taken for granted, that the forecast of a season divides itself into but two parts—"how to get on till the Pantomime," and, after it has done its duty, "till the Benefits."

A manager must not be seen to be mastered—

> "'Twould be recorded for a precedent,
> And many an error by the same example
> Would rush into the State. It cannot be."—
>
> MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Notwithstanding Mrs. Inchbald's bread was made *bitter* to her, she continued to eat it, but not without efforts to sweeten the morsel. She really, on the 26th of December, *walked* in the pantomime, and continued that exercise. On the 28th of the month her friend Wilson neither coming to the theatre, nor any tidings of him arriving, his part in 'Duplicity' was read for him; and soon after she heard that he was *discharged.* This word we have observed to *blank* the countenances in a green-room, through a whole evening. The performers miss their comrade, rather more than the audience their actor. You can *only* play with a man, who reads out of a book to you.

Mrs. Inchbald, to have got out of the first or

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second mobs of *travelling ladies*, or *ball-room beauties* in Harlequin's dominions, would gladly have gone to Bath; and she seriously wrote to Palmer on the subject: she did not reflect, or she did not know, that the two managers were such close friends, that unless Mr. Harris really wished her away, Palmer would not have dared to take her. He replied to her letter, and she saw him when he came to town; but nothing arose out of it. Again she resumed her pen, and finished a comedy. She sent it to Colman, who, by his delay, seemed (to her hopes at least) to deliberate. She moreover once had a message from him, but her time was not yet come. Among the subjects for farces, which she was now trying, one we find was called 'A Peep into a Planet.' This, no doubt, was the lucky subject, called, in 1784, 'A Mogul Tale'—the foundation of her dramatic fortune.

Of her private life, the features continued with but slight variety. Dr. Brodie in the autumn resumed the visits which he had slackened in spring, and with a degree of importunity that became offensive: he dined with her repeatedly, and at last she told him that she would see him no longer. He came to her door and was refused admittance: he forced his way up into the dining-room; on hearing this she rose, and with great indignation *turned him out*. Of her family, the

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members were, for the most part, very poor: she sometimes had their rent to pay, and sustain them in their misfortunes.

She read her daily lesson in the History of England, and extracted as well as read some works of Dr. Madan, and a Life of Alexander. The *Catholic*, however, does not appear to have sensibly mixed in her present pursuits; and on the whole her mind was acquiring, not so much a Protestant, as a free or philosophical character. She studied a work on the globes, and entered carefully in her common-place book, the distances, bulk, and other characteristics of the heavenly bodies. She was accumulating too a good deal of natural philosophy, and by degrees had a readiness in the use of her stores that seemed rather the result of regular education, than the elements only gleaned by industrious maturity. Although hitherto she was only *supposed* to be a writer, and her mental powers could be inferred solely from her conversation, she seems to have even now acquired a rather extensive celebrity. *Sympathy* might direct Pratt to sue for her friendship: his 'Fair Circassian' had shown him to possess poetical powers, at least for the drama, and Miss Farren had displayed her beauty in his heroine for six-and-twenty nights together: so that such a desire on the part of a popular writer, could not but be acknow-

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ledged as a compliment, and something more. But he shall speak for himself, which in truth he did *well*, and was remarkably fond of doing.

"Milstom Street, Bath, Feb. 22nd, 1782.

"There are fifty thousand reasons why I wish to know Mrs. Inchbald. Her worth, elegance, and ingenuity, are of themselves motives sufficient to excuse the awkwardness of this uninvited overture. Has she a place in her mind for a new friend? In *such* a mind, there must be 'many mansions;' and, till I am *proved*, I will accept the lowest—rising in gradation to the bosomed affections as I support the trial. I am myself surrounded by correspondents—to sustain which, without drawing upon the night to answer the deficiencies of the day, is not possible. Yet I am strongly tempted to invite one more. Mrs. Inchbald is a powerful attraction; I know that I admire, and I think that I can serve her.

"S. J. PRATT."

"To Mrs. Inchbald."

The new year 1782 did not come in with any appearance of comfort: yet on the 16th of January she was told her pantomime presence was dispensed with. We add that the usual reduction took place from her salary: this, however, lasted but till the end of March, when the manager,

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with an April bounty, showered her whole three pounds per week once more into her lap. The theatre, highly to the manager's credit, soon found out a reason for it. This was no other than an accusation, which she first heard from Mrs. Whitfield, that, agreeably to the *droit du seigneur*, revived by the proprietors of theatres, she had passed a *night* in Mr. Harris's house. Mr. Whitfield soon enabled her to trace this report to its origin; and she found Miss Ambrose had given it currency. To that lady she accordingly wrote, and had an answer from her, with which, and an apology from her friend Mrs. Whitfield, she was persuaded to be satisfied. The staring malignity, folly and falsehood of supposing that a beautiful woman, and that woman a widow, would surrender herself and her character thus idly, and without a cue from interest or passion to boot, hissed itself soon out of credibility even in the Green-room. Besides, she had determined to enlarge her limited independence, and to engage herself in the summer to Mr. Colman. In this she succeeded, but at the wretched pittance of thirty shillings per week. To keep on her present lodgings, for which she paid 10*s.* 6*d.* per week, was impossible on her plan of independence; she accordingly at first took up with a single room, for which she paid only 3*s.* 6*d.* and all the summer remained in it. "We really are sick at the recital of

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these sufferings of salary, residence, and slander. One piece of justice we can do her, we will put down the line of business, which she sustained for these comforts bestowed by a bountiful management. We embrace both theatres, winter and summer. Being quite at home in Lady Frances Touchwood, a character of modest fondness, and sensible simplicity,—as if *name* alone was sufficient appropriation, the Covent Garden stage assigned to her that monster of adultery and unbounded lewdness, Lady Touchwood in 'The Double Dealer.' That murderess, the Countess of Nottingham, in 'The Earl of Essex,' also fell to her share. They seemed as if they would play down modesty and beauty, by making them the stage representatives of treachery and licentiousness. By losing the esteem of the audience, less astonishment would be felt to see her walking in pantomime. Her former parts she retained when the plays were done. The *little* Theatre exhibited her in the 'Beggars Opera;' in 'Separate Maintenance;' in 'The East Indian;'[1] in 'The Man of Kent;' 'The Fair

[1] Though not vastly indebted to the newspapers as an actress at any time, this summer started an advocate for Mrs. Inchbald in the performance of 'The East Indian.' "A man who is supposed to know something of the matter" asserts, that she acted with Mrs. Bulkeley, an excellent artist, without at all suffering by comparison;—that he never heard sentences uttered more from the heart, than the tones of Mrs. Inchbald conveyed to his ear;—that no *impediment* at all was discernible through the whole night,—and that none such existed in the lady *professionally*; and that if the

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Penitent:' and she acted, for a single night, Miss English and Lavinia. But pantomime was her destiny wherever she went. The mighty soul of little Tydeus himself had yielded to the *wooden* sword of the agile hero; and having in 1780 given us '*The Genius of Nonsense*,' a pantomime, in 1782 he furnished us with '*The Nonsense of Genius*,' a still better thing: it was called, 'Harlequin Teague, or the Giant's Causeway.' Colman satirised the absurdities of modern masquerades. Here Mrs. Inchbald could make a *figure* at all events; but the great attraction was Wewitzer in Katterfelto, called, in the piece, *Caterpillar*. The songs only were printed; but as it was a speaking pantomime, we should like to revive the pleasantries which we heard at the time. We think Rooker painted him some very beautiful scenery, and it attracted crowds between the 17th of August and the 14th of September.

At last she saw a gleam of hope as a dramatic author. Mr. Harris had consented to receive one of her farces, and to advance her twenty pounds upon the bargain. Even here difficulty attended

winter theatres were anything more discerning than mere *money speculations* commonly are, any competent manager would find her equal to a share of first-rate business in his community.

The comedy, whatever support she might give to it, lived but nine nights. It was written by a lady, who knew nothing of India; and, wanting local manners, was voted a misnomer, and expired, as Johnson says, under "frigid indifference."

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her, and she had a long correspondence with Mr. Pratt on the subject of a license from the Lord Chamberlain. Sir Charles Bunbury on this occasion interested himself effectually, and on the 31st of August he called upon her and put the license of the Lord Chamberlain into her hand. She now thought it prudent to descend a stage in her abode, and ventured to lodge at the rate of seven shillings weekly. Nay, on the 29th of September she had a friendly interview with Mr. Harris; settled for a future article with him—no great matter we may suppose; but her importance seemed to be rising: she grew more worthy of *his* attention, and became of more consequence in herself. "This turn had made amends" for former cruelty, and she left him *happy*. The Whitfields seem to have been very kind to her; and any friend who from character and fortune was likely to serve her, they did not narrowly keep to themselves, but rather displayed her merits anxiously, and often effectually. We allude particularly here to Mr. Babb, who took more than common notice of her, and made her presents. She corresponded, this year, with her mother, and other country connexions, and visited and received her theatrical friends. We do not know the exact period in her mother's life that occasioned the following letter to her sister; but cannot very widely stray by placing it here: the

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old lady was at this time indisposed, and in the year following died. It is a little wonder of filial affection and prudential wisdom.

"DEAR SISTER,

"I received your letter, for which I am very much obliged to you: it requires but a very short answer, which is this. If you see my mother ill-treated, you certainly ought not to stand on any ceremony, (whoever the person be that uses her ill,) but it is your duty to insist upon their changing their behaviour; and, if your private interposition has no weight, you are certainly bound to complain *openly* to all your brothers and sisters, and see what effect their joint influence may have.

"I must own you put me in a very disagreeable situation, in telling me my mother is ill-treated, and at the same time binding me to secrecy; as my duty, as well as my affection for her, compels me to use my utmost endeavour that she may at least pass her remaining day in tranquillity; therefore, I shall most assuredly take the lesser sin of the two, and rather break my word with you, than neglect my duty to her: notwithstanding, it is my determination, provided you still have cause for your complaints, to let both my brothers know of it. Yet, before I proceed so far, let me ask you, whether you do not think my mother, from age and sickness, may have

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lost her temper, so as to complain, perhaps by turns, to every one, of the person absent; and that her apprehension of giving trouble (which you know was always peculiar to her,) may make her suppose she *does;* and that people are unkind, when they may really not be so? I don't say it *is* thus; but I would wish it were, rather than suppose there was such a monster in our family, as an undutiful child to a sick mother.

"Let me hear from you soon again; till then your secret is safe: but I rely upon your writing me the *truth*, without the smallest reserve; and depend on my prudence in making use of what you tell me. In the mean time, I remain,

"Dear Sister, &c. &c.

"ELIZABETH INCHBALD."

[To her sister Dolly, most probably.]

On the 16th of September she took all her things from the Haymarket Theatre; and her friend Hitchcock, who was Daly's prompter, and man of business, having executed articles with her for Daly's Dublin season, commencing on or about the 1st of November, 1782, and terminating the 24th of May, 1783, she took the stage for Shrewsbury on Sunday the 6th of October, dined at Maidenhead, supped at Oxford, and arrived late on the 7th at Shrewsbury. Here, as she had some spare time, and Hitchcock knew exactly when Daly required her services, she readily en-

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gaged to act a month with Miller, who managed at Shrewsbury, and he agreed to pay her one guinea per week, and to allow her a benefit, by which alone, she on the 4th of November cleared £10. 2*s*. 3*d*. She performed about twice a week; in 'Percy' (Elwina) three times; Mrs. Candour twice; Belvidera, Jane Shore, the Fair Penitent, and Lady Randolph, each once; and the Mourning Bride for her benefit. While she was at Shrewsbury, she attended Mass every Sunday, and on one Friday went to prayers in addition. On this head of performance her arrears had been considerable, but she was by no means unable or unwilling to pay them strictly up. For her board and lodging while at Shrewsbury she paid eleven shillings per week, and separately for her tea and beer.

Her engagement with the Irish manager was next to be thought of. She was in Dublin to overpass all previous terms, and receive the splendid salary of five pounds per week; but she was bound to *take* a benefit, (day to be assigned by Daly,) and to pay thirty pounds towards it, by stoppages of three pounds weekly out of the salary. So that the manager was safe, whatever became of the performer. Well, then he took from the actual receipts of the night as much as completed the thirty already got to SIXTY pounds; the remainder to be her own; and the

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three pounds weekly stopped from the salary to be paid up.

Her friend Hitchcock, who had staid at Shrewsbury during her engagement with Miller, added to his kindness by attending her to Dublin; accordingly at six o'clock on the morning of the 5th of November, our *Catholic* charmer, with no *plot* in her head but one for a farce, left Shrewsbury with Mr. Hitchcock. They slept that night at Conway; on the 6th they breakfasted at Bangor Ferry, and arrived at Holyhead at eight o'clock in the evening. They were detained there by the Packet till noon of Friday the 8th, when they went on board, and landed safely at Dublin at the same time the day following. Here she had the happiness to meet again her friend Mr. Kemble, who renewed his old claims to her society, and upon whom fortune was now really beginning to smile. The last winter had introduced him to the *genius* of the Castle, Jephson, whose Count of Narbonne he performed in the most masterly style; this secured for him the friendships of the Inchiquins, the Gardiners (Mountjoy), and all who aimed at mental distinction in the capital of Ireland. Mrs. Inchbald following Miss Younge in the heroines of the drama, was yet not strong enough to challenge the impression she had made. She took Adelaide in 'The Count of Narbonne,' not the Countess, and Kemble came to tell her

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that Jephson liked her much. We have here an opportunity, by a few dates, to draw a few correct inferences. That astonishing tragedian, Mrs. Siddons, had made her first appearance at Drury-Lane Theatre on the 10th of October, 1782. On the 20th of November, "a little month," the keen scent of the London managers had proposed engagements to her brother Kemble; and he called with one of them to show Mrs. Inchbald; and soon after sent her the second, which was from Covent-Garden, rarely second in activity. This compliment was returned by Daly to Drury Lane; he went over himself, and engaged Mrs. Siddons to act in the summer in Ireland. She preferred that engagement to many others that offered, and for a limited number of nights was to receive six hundred pounds. We suppose, by this time, the sages of Liverpool thought her worthy to to appear before *them*. The nobility of Ireland began, in advance, to display miniatures of her at table, and Kemble was appealed to as to the resemblance, and flattered we may be assured by the bond of brother, which united him to the "observed of all observers," and acknowledged him at the same time to be worthy of the distinction. Mrs. Siddons incidentally was thus of service to Mrs Inchbald: Daly wanted all the nights he could get, and subsequently bought up her benefit.

Mrs. Inchbald opened in Dublin with Bellario.

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In 'Which is the Man,' she acted Julia six times; Mrs. Beverley, Adelaide, Octavia, Statira, Erixene in 'The Brothers,' Jacintha, and Lady Brute: in 'The Jubilee,' in 'The Chances,' in 'Rule a Wife,' in 'The Distressed Mother,' and in 'The School for Scandal.' Her two friends, Digges and Kemble, were now acting together, and Tragedy was Muse of the Ascendant, expecting the arrival of her natural representative.

Her studies this year were well chosen; and we have the digest of them before us in very copious extracts: Pope's Homer, Dryden's Virgil, the Eneid, with its long Dedication, which she lightened with the Travels of Gulliver: and she perused deliberately the English Grammar of Johnson.

The salary she weekly received, agreeably to her articles, was forty shillings English, with the *Irish thirteener* upon the shilling=£2. 3*s*. 4*d*. At first, she boarded and lodged with Mrs. Fyfe, at £1. 2*s*. 9*d*. per week, and had the society of three other ladies, members of the same profession; but, on the 21st of December, removed to a lodging at a Mrs. Whyte's, to whom she paid 9*s*. 9*d*. for the rooms only. She had now a long list of visitors to receive, and found this plan more convenient. Her first landlady continued a friendly intimacy. She never lost one acquaintance by acquiring another. Mr. Kemble expressed himself to be her warm admirer; and she often heard his praises from people who wished her happiness;

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but whatever he felt, he appears to have cautiously abstained from any thing by which it could be supposed he stood pledged to any connexion nearer than friendship. There appear some ingenuous wishes on her part that he would declare himself in form. She reads his books; writes to him; has notes, sometimes beautiful, and at others *strange*. When he calls, she either welcomes or refuses him admittance: he yields to her humour for the time, but returns, and is again in favour: and thus the matter stood until she quitted Dublin. The Hitchcocks, all the family, continued very intimate with her, and proposed, for her diversion, occasional trips into the country: one of them was to visit Lord Charlemont's park; at another, she was presented with the addresses of Mr. Daly, the manager. He had a *wife;* so that the profligacy and impudence of his proposals were without palliative. How she treated him, we can readily imagine; and how such a beast received her rejection and the indignation which, as she felt it, we may be sure she did not suppress. It is probable that it became impossible to stay with him after he was exposed; for he bought up her benefit, and her friend Mr. Kemble was the messenger who, on the 23rd of May, 1783, brought her heavy guineas for the payment. Two days after this, she took a farewell dinner with the Hitchcocks, who saw her to the inn; and went in a boat on board the Fly packet, about nine

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o'clock in the evening. The weather was fine; but the wind not always favorable, and sometimes sinking into a flat calm, she suffered from sickness; but on Tuesday evening, about eight o'clock, arrived in safety at Liverpool. She was no sooner on English ground, than a son of Erin borrowed a trifle of Irish money from her. She lent Mr. Conolly, a player, ten pounds. She supped and slept at her inn, and the next day after dinner, with some pleasant companions, started in the coach for London. The Whitfields, in March last, had offered their house, and she now immediately repaired thither, where she was comforted by intelligence that her mother was much better than she had been. Mr. Babb and a Miss Barrs were on a visit at the Whitfields, so she merely called on her sister Hunt, and then passed her time with them until Sunday, when she dined with her sister; and getting into the Norwich coach at ten at night, arrived at eight o'clock the next morning at her mother's house at Standingfield. She had the pleasure of finding her tolerably well; her sister Dolly was living with her, and her sister Bigsby and her husband were soon there to welcome her. She could only stay with them three days, and on the Wednesday morning early got into the coach, and arrived in London in the evening. Her friends, the Whitfields, were obliged to quit town, and the other visitors departed when they did; but Mrs. Inchbald was left

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there, to reside rent-free, living of course at her own expense, until they came back again. In the mean time she re-entered upon her Haymarket engagement, and her old friend Davis upon his daily visitations; the same week renewed her slender engagement with Mr. Harris; and on the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Whitfield, she supped with them, and then took possession of a lodging she had taken, which she always emphatically styled her *home;* and no human being was ever more attached to one.

Our fair readers will like to be told, that Mrs. Inchbald, with equal economy, taste, and purity, was among the first to try the effect of her natural hair upon the stage. On the 2nd of August (summer to be sure) she absolutely appeared without powder; still, however, the natural shape of the human head was only to be guessed at, as at present, winged out by certain side-boxes of curls, and the head thus describing an equilateral triangle, of which the base was uppermost. Still to be rid of the *larded meal* was something. She never makes a complaint as to her share in Colman's pantomime, but acted in it thirteen times. He had no great novelty this season, for 'A Friend in Need is a Friend Indeed,' was only a novelty in name, being very materially indebted to Goldsmith's 'Good-natured Man,' and kept alive only by a controversy with the manager. While she was there this season, the following

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occurrence happened behind the scenes: it is related by herself, and formed two fragments of her Autobiography:—

"To have fixed the degrees and shades of female virtue, possessed at this time by the actresses of the Haymarket Theatre, would have been employment for an able casuist.

"One evening, about half an hour before the curtain was drawn up, some accident having happened in the dressing-room of one of the actresses, a woman of known intrigue, she ran in haste to the dressing-room of Mrs. Wells, to finish the business of her toilet. Mrs. Wells, who was the mistress of the well-known Captain Topham, shocked at the intrusion of a reprobated woman, who had a worse character than herself, quitted her own room, and ran to Miss Farren's, crying, 'What would Captain Topham say, if I were to remain in such company?'

"No sooner had she entered the room, to which as an asylum she had fled, than Miss Farren flew out at the door, repeating, 'What would Lord Derby say, if I should be seen in such company?'"

The *Que diroit-il?* was carried on, they say, to a respectable *married* lady in the company and her *husband;* but, Mrs. Inchbald believes, not very accurately. Whether she suspected the addition of *malice,* or thought the line should not "stretch to the crack of doom," to use an expression of hers, we are not *casuists* enough to determine.

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Mrs. Inchbald had herself no husband, unfortunately, to *consult* on such an occasion; and had accordingly contracted a rather close intimacy with Mrs. Wells, which she would not discontinue, whatever was said to her; and her friendship followed that unhappy woman even into the madhouse and the gaol. *Obstinacy* is not a pleasing virtue, if we occasionally find it on the right side; but *Charity* is only weakness, when absolutely thrown away; and even *then* the motive makes it virtue.

We have hitherto had no opportunity of presenting the person of our heroine to the reader, so as that he might peruse the inventory of her perfections; a decided admirer of hers thus reduces them to items. She herself preserved, and in her own hand endorsed the paper—

"DESCRIPTION OF ME."

"AGE—Between 30 and 40, which, in the register of a lady's birth, means a little turned of 30.

HEIGHT—Above the middle size, and rather tall.

FIGURE—Handsome, and striking in its general air, but a little too stiff and erect.

SHAPE—Rather too fond of sharp angles.

SKIN—By nature fair, though a little freckled, and with a tinge of sand, which is the colour of her eye-lashes, but made coarse by ill-treatment upon her cheeks and arms.

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BOSOM—None; or so diminutive, that it's like a needle in a bottle of hay."

[On the last article the biographer has to remark, that he admits the *want* complained of, but cannot admit the simile; for although, with Bottom, he allows that "good sweet *hay* has no fellow," and may therefore vie with the breath from the purest bosom; yet the needle, if found, has not a single *point* of resemblance to any thing but the sharpness of her *wit*.]

"HAIR — Of a sandy auburn, and rather too straight as well as thin.

FACE—Beautiful in effect, and beautiful in every feature.

COUNTENANCE—Full of spirit and sweetness; excessively interesting, and, without indelicacy, voluptuous.

DRESS — Always becoming; and very seldom worth so much as EIGHT-PENCE."

In the August of 1783, Mr. Kemble came to town, not like the rest of the world to follow in the train of his sister, but to collect a train of followers to himself, in which he happily succeeded. He paid his fair friend many *compliments*, but ambition now had taken full possession of him; he had determined to be the great actor of his day, and the Manager of Drury Lane Play-house; and

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he had (to *him*) classical authority for saying,

> " When light-wing'd toyes
> Of feather'd *Cupid* foil with wanton dulness
> My speculative and officed instrument,
> That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
> Let all indign and base adversities
> Make head against my estimation."

But if hope thus brightened the crest of Kemble, his fair friend seemed almost out of heart and hope—the little fame she had obtained as an actress, and which formerly stood without any great disparagement by the side of Mrs. Siddons, was now become no more than a waxen taper in the solar blaze; it was not even expected to shine; nobody thought about it, or said a word in its favour if they did. Fame is the spur to the clear spirit; and the hope that her talents as a writer might aid, or at length displace those so little valued in the actress, had kept her up for a time; but though Harris had given her £20 on account of a farce, and she had got it licensed, there was no note of preparation sounded about it, and she was to drudge on upon a salary of sometimes £2, frittered away by stoppages on one account or another till it bore the look of the attorney 6*s.* 8*d.* and 13*s.* 4*d.* rather than the payment of a *pleasing* profession. She had lent her money to an Irish actor, and that did not return. She had remitted money to her sister Hunt. Her other connexions applied to her, and she had little heart to deny them. In addition to these drags upon her course, all had

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gone wrong with her poor humble friend Davis, and she was considerably in his debt. He was obliged to tell her of his necessities, and she was at great difficulty to get the money together to repay him. The nature of his claim may be guessed at by the occasional notices of his dressing her hair, as he was so frequently in the same company with the Inchbalds—it might be a long accumulation of outlays, never but for his misfortunes intended to be claimed; however, she paid him a sum of £43. 18*s.*, and took his receipt in full of all demands. All these things were to be liquidated by her own privations. Her lodgings cost her seven shillings per week. She dined and supped almost daily with the Whitfields, and, when she did not, went without a dinner. We have no kind of doubt of her making a suitable return for the accommodation of their table. She sometimes accompanied them to their friend Mr. Babb's, who had presented her with some china, and seems to have greatly admired and respected her. She had but just rejoiced, which she sincerely did, at her friend Kemble's brilliant success in Hamlet, when she received intelligence that her poor mother died on the 6th of October, 1783. With her brother George Simpson, she went down in a post-chaise to Standingfield—passed a couple of days with her family, visited her mother's grave, and attended the Catholic service on the Sunday at Coldham: they then returned to town. Her

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brother, on these visits to town, was at Mr. Twiss's house, whither she went to see him, and indulge herself with Mr. Twiss's conversation. George hesitated at first about taking the farm held by his late mother; but at the end of the year he took it. Of this concern, more will appear in due season.

Whether the hint might be caught from her performance in 'The East Indian,' we know not; but she consulted Sir Charles Bunbury in the summer, upon getting out to India; but the plan, however laid, fell to the ground. She had now, from such repeated discouragements, absolutely laid aside her pen; but continued to read with the greatest avidity, that she might be at least qualified to hold it, whenever managers in their wisdom might conceive it possible that an actress who walked in their pantomimes, should have wit or memory sufficient to furnish out a farce capable of diverting a London audience.

She read this year 'Rollin's Ancient History,' those of Greece and Rome, England and Ireland; 'The Pantheon,' as a necessary guide to 'Homer's Odyssey' translated by Pope and his assistants; 'Tasso' by Hoole, the 'Paradise Lost' and 'Regained,' 'Hudibras,' 'The Wars of Jugurtha,' 'Junius's Letters,' 'Hume's Essays,' 'The Letters of Voltaire,' and 'Essays upon Shakspeare;' 'Ovid,' some of Plato's works, 'The Dialogues of Lucian,' the Classics, of course, in the best translations. Such studies, with friendly correspon-

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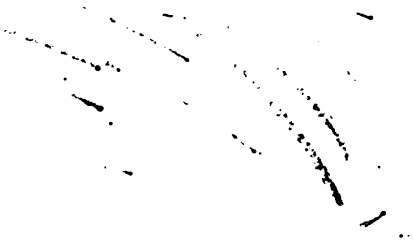
dence, seem fully to account for all spare time she could have had in her profession. But she added a very cautious and meditated perusal of 'Johnson's Lives of the Poets' to all these; and they seem to have turned her mind to acute criticism, and shown her how to avoid the *cant* of that gratifying task, which is undertaken by minds of every description.



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CHAPTER IX.

Kemble takes her lodgings—The spot described—Recently surveyed—The Whitfields and she quarrel—Twiss, the mutual friend, tries to reconcile them—A lodging taken in Hart Street—At length has a farce accepted by Colman—Was induced to act in it—Was at the reading, not known to be the writer—The 'Mogul Tale' brings her 100 guineas—Stammers on the first night of it—Letters from Twiss and Kemble—Lovers attracted by the honey of success—Reminds Colman that he has a comedy also in his hands—Now then he reads it, admires it, christens it 'I'll tell you what'—Writes both Prologue and Epilogue—Its original cast—Letters from Mr. Twiss of great importance—Draft for £300—Buys into the Funds—"Appearance is against them"—Royal command—Liberal as she was covetous.

MRS. INCHBALD lodged at this time in a place sufficiently retired, at the house of a Mrs. Smith, No. 2, Leicester Court, Castle Street, Leicester Fields. The entrance we well remember was a wooden gate, which closed in a paved court-yard, that seemed hardly to need so idle a defence; but it was cheap and silent, and when she left town, Kemble, that his studies might be uninterrupted, (as there they must be,) wrote to her that "her late apartment now called *him* lord and

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master." Like Bobadil at poor Cobb's, "he found the cabin was convenient;" and the first letter we had from him was dated from this chosen spot. From his *gate*, we are sure the master of the premises must have been a carpenter. The house, too, had a front of planks, laid over one another to bear off rain, and was painted of a neat-enough stone colour. It may be thought entitled to this notice; for assuredly, two such tenants as the writer of the 'Simple Story,' and the performer of Coriolanus, have but rarely inhabited the same dwelling.

We have been this day (1832) to look again at a tenement, which nothing for near fifty years has called upon us to notice. It remains as it was in 1784, notwithstanding the encroaching improvements that seem to be dressing London up in universal elegance, as if it contained no abodes for any but the wealthy and the prosperous. The two houses remain as they were in our youth. The carpenter's wooden palisades alone, with the wicket, have given way to an *iron* swing-gate and latch, about three feet high; so that, at night, it has less the appearance of an elephant's cage. The owner of the spot seemed somewhat surprised that we should survey his *wooden walls* thus curiously; so we told him the house, *half a century* ago, had harboured a fair friend of ours. He *smiled*, and we parted.

But not to anticipate upon the course of this

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narrative, we replace her in her humble lodging at the commencement of the year, and have to remark upon the rigorous self-denial she thought herself obliged to practise. She refused all visitors, probably for *their* sakes, and even complimentary calls for her own. The Whitfields absolutely kept her in existence; but this sorry dependence at last provoked its infallible follower, *contempt*. Her friend used her so *ill*, that Mrs. Inchbald would not even go in her company to the theatre, and was compelled to take her meal of discomfort at home.

Mr. Twiss, however, the last day of March had her to dine with him, to meet Mrs. Whitfield; and in April this foolish business ended. She needed a respectable address, to allow of visits from persons of any figure in the world, and wrote to Mrs. Whitfield for the use of her house when she quitted town for Birmingham: a favorable answer was returned. This was of great consequence to her at that time. Mr. Colman had accepted her farce of 'The Mogul Tale,' and, during the alterations which he recommended, he occasionally called upon her at Whitfield's; for it does not appear that he was ever apprised of her wooden tenement in the court. It had been first submitted to him as the production of a Mrs. Woodley, and he then thought there was merit in it, though he remarked that "he never met with

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so cramp a hand in his life, nor was ever so much puzzled to make out a piece."

Having thus secured for the summer a place to see her manager, she was so far appeased towards her friend; who, however, sustained a few refusals as to dining with her, accompanying her to the Opera, and so forth: but at last, on the 4th of June, she says—"I packed up every thing, dined with my friends, who left town for Birmingham, went home to tea, and then returned with all my things, the *locum tenens* of a decent habitation." She would not take her sister Dolly into the house to pass some time with her, without express permission; she accordingly wrote to ask it, and received the sanction of the owners. Dolly accordingly lived with her at Mrs. Whitfield's, from the 6th of July till the 9th of August, when she returned to Standingfield, greatly missed by her sister. To get the chapter of habitation to a close, we here add, that against the return of her friends to town, Mrs. Inchbald took a lodging for herself in Hart Street, at the house of a Mr. Morell, to which she removed on the 15th of September, leaving a clear stage to her dramatic friends on the following day, when they arrived for the winter campaign.

Having thus respectably housed the Muse herself, we must attend to the production of her first offspring. On the 4th of March she sent 'The

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Mogul Tale,' in her own name, to Mr. Colman. On the 7th he agreed to purchase it at the price of one hundred guineas. On the 17th she received it again from Mr. Colman, with a note which pleased her. Two or three of his short notes upon business, may please others as well as the anxious author:—

"DEAR MADAM,

"If you can't make out my scrawls on the blank leaf, pray do me the favour of calling on Thursday morning, and I will explain my dark hints to you. Your very humble servant,

"G. C."

"I wish to have the farce completed as soon as possible. The idea is droll, as well as temporary; and, with a little care, I think it can't fail. Success attend it!"

"Mr. Colman is very sorry he could not wait on Mrs. Inchbald before he left town. He has taken the *Mogul* with him. He is not yet quite the thing; but Mr. C. will try to bring him back the better for his excursion."

"Mr. Colman presents his compliments to Mrs. Inchbald, and assures her that he never mentioned her name to any person whatever on the subject of 'The Mogul Tale;' and was yesterday extremely surprised at his son and Mr. Jewell both suggesting her as the author, which sugges-

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tion however he did not in the least confirm, nor was it in the green-room. He really thinks it better for the author not to be avowed at present, though he thinks the piece cannot be injured; and to attempt to injure the reputed author would be infamous."

After she had made some alterations, sent to him on the 19th, he took it into the country with him; and no doubt the 'Mogul' benefited by his prescriptions.

Soon after the opening of the Haymarket season, it was put in train for performance. As an actress in it, she was present at the reading of her own farce, and, under her mask, highly pleased by its reception in the green-room. This was on June 23rd; yet at the rehearsal, on the 28th, she thought she did not like the alterations: but on the 6th of July all doubts were dispelled by its most brilliant success. Her own record is sufficiently modest:—"I played in 'The Mogul Tale,' my own farce; it went off with the greatest applause." She continues to speak of great applause and full houses the "ten times of its representation, in the months of July and August." On the 20th of July she had her benefit, by which she cleared £77. 8*s.*; and from Mr. Colman she received £27. 12*s.*; making together the hundred guineas agreed upon. Kemble was at Liverpool when it came out, and wrote to her a letter of congratula-

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tion, which is very characteristic, and therefore it is inserted:—

"Liverpool, July 17, 1784.

"My dear Madam,

"Next to your *self*, nobody can be more inclined to think highly of your *productions* than I am; but, alas! my poetical days, I believe, are gone by. In my best pretensions, I was but an indifferent rhymer; nor in my vainest moments ever thought any thing I did fit to be called poetry. I have ransacked my brains for apt parallels, but to no purpose. I cannot pay you a compliment in verse too high for what I truly think of you in prose; and I might tell you, that poetry is too essentially fictitious to answer the purposes of real esteem, and to express deserved praise. The fault, however, at present, is in me, not in the *art*. I repeated you some lines of my translation from Ovid, when I was in town: I thought to have finished the Epistle in the country; but no such thing. I have laboured and laboured so long in vain at it, that it is now thrown aside from an absolute conscience of wasting so much time to no manner of purpose. The truth is, my health declines every day: I have neither spirits (in which I never abounded) nor genius (of which inclination, perhaps, wholly supplied the place) to attempt any thing for my improvement in polite letters. You know me, I

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believe, well enough to feel for me when I say, that with all my ambition I am afraid I shall live and die a common fellow. Your regular and continent life gives you the assurance of many healthful years; and your uncommon talents, having now forced themselves into notice, will crown you with growing reputation. If I could write, I would: I cannot—so you must receive esteem instead of flattery, and sincerity for wit, when I swear there is no WOMAN I more truly admire, nor any MAN whose abilities I more highly esteem. Your very obedient servant,

"J. P. KEMBLE."

She had taken the liberty to make one of her farcical buffoons personate the Holy Father. This *Protestant* freedom with the Pope exposed her to the antithesis of an epigram signed "Father Paul." It did not damp her enjoyment:—

"FATHER PAUL TO MRS. INCHBALD.

"A rank Papist born and a rank Papist bred,
By penances humbled, by MY doctrines fed—
The Pope you burlesque, and to theatres cramm'd:
Your *farce* has been *saved*—but *you* will be *d——d!*"

Her friend Twiss was at Norwich when 'The Mogul' made his appearance in the little theatre. As far as the newspapers then could inform any body, he had them before him. 'The Morning Herald' had so utterly "marred a curious tale in telling it," that he asks her why she had not

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told it for them *herself;* to save them trouble, prevent their miscarriage, and do her own invention justice? This is now currently done, through the prompter's clerk, whom it is the author's interest to supply with the *theme;* leaving to him the then slight task of composing a few *variations,* adapted to the different *instruments* and their style of *execution.*

We have shown above that the greatest care had been taken to conceal that she was the author of the farce. The best mask they thought was to give her a part in it: it had nearly betrayed both author and piece. While she was standing in her natural alarm upon the stage, as Selima, in the second scene, she heard a cue from another character, Atkins the shoemaker, after which she was *herself* to speak. The cue was, "Since we left Hyde Park Corner." She had merely to reiterate as an exclamation, "Hyde Park Corner!" but terror had robbed her entirely of utterance; she turned pale, and remained for a time in a suspension of mute amazement. At length, with that stammer which in private only attended her, she slowly, and in a sepulchral voice, ejaculated, "Hh-yde Pa-ark Co-orner!" to the great astonishment and derision of many; and probably, though an emotion disproportioned to the occasion, there might be some who considered it as the most *natural* exclamation they ever heard from the stage in their lives. However,

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her own humour soon pealing in upon the audience, they were hurried on into the heartiest bursts of laughter that they had enjoyed for a long time.

Upon the settlement with Mr. Colman, she took £44 to replace all the savings which she had been obliged to appropriate to the discharge of poor Davis's bill of £43. 18*s*. We hinted formerly that it was professionally accumulated; we have ascertained now for what particular expenses it had run to such an amount. There is a little tale attached to it, not of a Mogul, but a more important personage, a Hair-dresser. Mr. Davis, ladies, had the honour of being first minister of state to several empresses of the Theatres-Royal. He was accordingly closeted, three and four hours together, with that astonishing *artist* Mrs. Abington, whose taste presided over courts and birthdays, and all polite assemblies. He was not equally *wanted* by Miss Younge, but extremely welcome to her toilet; and to Mrs. Inchbald's he had a similar access; to which, for years, we may add her tea, and dinner, and supper table, where they sat like *nature* and *art*, combined in some *novel* manner together. Davis was treated by the ladies as if they never thought of his *sex*; and a more simple and well-intentioned creature never ministered at the shrine of vanity. He contrived their dresses, and he dressed the wearers of them, until the last glance pronounced the labour of

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enchantment accomplished. We now see how £43. 18*s.*, in a series of years, might even frugally be expended.

Of her treasure she immediately dispatched, as presents, five guineas to her sister Hunt, two guineas to her sister Dolly, one guinea to her sister Bigsby, half a guinea to her cousin Hunt, and one guinea to Mrs. Whitfield's servant.

It may be easily surmised that her success as a writer did not lessen her charm as a woman. Those who had before given her full credit for genius, now claimed the honours of prophecy for themselves. Sir Charles Bunbury called frequently upon her, and was sometimes permitted an audience, and at others not: he would even insist upon her walking out with him, and she thought that he was becoming rather *particular;* but their union never advanced beyond friendship. There were many, for a great part of her existence, who dishonoured themselves, not *her*, by supposing it possible that she might listen to vows *not* made at the altar; but she really lived up to her own notions, and immediately resented a *look* that displeased her. Yet she was far from measuring weaker minds by her own standard; and was *very* far from being strait-laced at the theatre, where in fact she was excessively beloved. Harris, the manager, was among her admirers, and gave her once materials for a ludicrous story, which *she* alone perhaps could venture to

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tell; but he always did her full justice, and said, "That woman, Inchbald, has solemnly devoted herself to *virtue* and a *garret*."

She now resumed her literary labours with avidity; and heaps together her notices of "writing" at her "*play*," at a "*farce*," at some "*plot*" for one or the other, as it might work out: but such memoranda of pieces begun, leave an uncertainty as to which they were; for though none of them could prove a "*headless* carcase," before maturity it is usually a "*nameless* thing," and receives its baptismal rite at last from the manager, as will be seen when we come to her next production.

She now took the liberty of reminding Mr. Colman that he had a comedy of hers in his possession (anonymously sent, or as Mrs. Woodley's); and he said he would go home immediately and read it. This, after a world of changes, he determined to bring out; and having pleased himself with a name for it, wrote to Mrs. Inchbald, "If you call upon me, '*I'll tell you what*' it is." But before we come to the actual preparation of her comedy for the stage, it may be as well to say that the author desired to have it back from Mr. Colman in the month of September, and submitted it to the perusal of her friend Twiss. That gentleman's letter will best tell us what he thought of it, and evince his exact judgment in such matters:—

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"DEAR MADAM,

"As I found you anxious to have your comedy returned this day, I have just now read it through; and indeed, after I had once dipped into it, I found sufficient attraction in the piece to induce me to peruse the whole of it immediately. As far as my poor judgment goes, I think the comedy, upon the whole, does very great honour to your talents: as I am not in the habit of paying compliments, you will not suspect me of insincerity. As a proof of my wish to give you my real opinion of its merits, I take the liberty of saying that I think the fifth act infinitely inferior to the others: the catastrophe is not without a considerable share of improbability, nor is it managed with that adroitness which I should have expected from your pen. The scene in the first act, between Lady Harriet and Bloom, rather drags: the character of the latter I think rather too highly coloured; nor has that of Lady Harriet any discriminating feature, but appears in some parts made up of discordant qualities. The third act might, I think, be rendered more interesting by throwing something more of the business of the piece into it, which might be effected by the first introduction of Mrs. Euston into that act; who, though an interesting character, is not brought sufficiently forward on the canvass. The scene in the fourth act, in which she discovers herself to her father, is, in point of writing, very far inferior

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to any other part of the comedy. If the husband of Mrs. Euston could be brought on in the fifth, it would add greatly to the interest of the catastrophe, and by that means the discovery of the Colonel's daughter lay stronger hold of the heart, than can possibly be the case as it is at present brought about. I flatter myself I know you too well to suppose you can be offended at these remarks, which I should not have presumed to make, had I not hoped that possibly some or other of the hints might suggest a re-consideration of the piece, and give you a farther opportunity of displaying those talents which you possess (without a compliment) in so eminent a degree. Verbal inaccuracies I have not noticed, as they will of course be done away before the piece meets the public eye.

"I am, dear Madam, your sincere well-wisher and friend,

"FRANCIS TWISS."

"Caroline Street, Bedford Square.
Nov. 19, 1784."

Mr. Colman thought the fifth act greatly inferior to the other four, and went seriously into the task of suggestion early in the following year. The year 1784 was every way gratifying to Mrs. Inchbald: she had once succeeded, and her manager insured her success in the greater achievement that was to follow. In the month of November he sent for the play back, and she re-

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turned it much improved by her laborious revision. Her summer success as an author had increased her consequence every where; and Covent-Garden, from October, added £1 a week to her salary as an actress. She passed her Sundays usually with Mr. Twiss, in Caroline Street, when he was in town; and their evenings were occupied by readings, either his or Mr. Kemble's, from the best writers of either poetry or prose. Among her private studies, we find that she read 'Plutarch's Lives;' some parts of Aristotle's works, such as were translated; some of Ovid; 'Lord Chesterfield's Letters;' the 'Historic Doubts' of Walpole; and the works of Marmontel. She had borrowed Ovid, we see, from Kemble; for he could not find one of the volumes for her. As his letter contains an opinion relative to Randolph, which may startle certain antiquarian critics, they are extremely welcome to it. Kemble a "black-letter" man! Why, he deliberately preferred Dryden's plays to those written by all the contemporaries of Shakspeare:—

"25, Henrietta Street.

"DEAR MADAM,

"I have been hunting above an hour for the second volume of Ovid, and cannot light upon it, high or low. What can be come of it I can't imagine; I had it in my hands a day or two ago.

"I send my compliments to Mrs. Whitfield,

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and return her lord and master his two books. They told me Randolph was a *poet*. God help us! some men are strangely fortunate. I have read his works twice over, and, for the life of me, I have not been able to make out his title to any thing more on Parnassus than a very small plot—and that 's at its foot, thinly sprinkled with a few gay but common flowers, and for the most part overrun with weeds and brambles.

" I am, Madam, your obedient servant,

" J. P. KEMBLE."

The reader may perhaps be surprised to find, since her great success, no further mention of Mrs. Siddons. It may have been inferred, that having shared, or rather brightened, adversity together, Mrs. Inchbald would have been the welcome friend of her prosperity; and particularly as Mr. Kemble and her future brother Twiss were constant visitors of the widowed muse. The position of Siddons, for some time at least after her elevation, really afforded no leisure for more than recollections. We are not to suppose she forgot her old intimates because she did not visit them:

" She had the world as her confectionary,
The mouths, the tongues, the eyes, the hearts of men,
At duty, more than she could frame employments;
That numberless upon her stuck, as leaves
Do on the oak."

The interests of her family, her own fame,

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alike called upon her "to follow the sugared game before her," and practise all the address, and some of the arts, of one who associated so much with the highest personages in the realm. Mrs. Inchbald, we are to remember too, was in the rival interest; she was at Covent-Garden Theatre. She associated with Mrs. Wells, and was a little impracticable. The first show of popular displeasure against Mrs. Siddons, was made known to Mrs. Inchbald by Davis. Twiss himself called to give the same alarming intelligence: but the storm was soon laid.

One little note occurs among her papers, from that beautiful girl Maria Siddons, which shows that the great woman was not inattentive to the *chef-d'œuvre* of her only rival:—

"My dear Mrs. Inchbald,

"My mother desires me to give her best compliments to you, and to ask if you could have the goodness to procure us an order for three, to-morrow evening; as we wish very much to see Mrs. Crawford's Lady Randolph, we shall be extremely obliged to you: and, with compliments from all here,

"I am, dear Mrs. Inchbald, yours truly,

"Maria Siddons."

"Wednesday morning."

During the whole year of 1785 she lodged in Hart Street with the Morells, paying 10*s.* 6*d.*

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per week till the end of September, and then fifteen shillings; the difference we may imagine to be for either firing, or some garret in addition to contain her moveables. We see no great accessions to her run of characters at Covent Garden: she acted the very delicate part of Imoinda in 'Oroonoko' several times.

Though Colman thought her a very clever woman, yet he could not endure any one of the songs she wrote for 'The Mogul,' and in truth they were very laboured nothings in rhyme. He says, very candidly, you may judge of my dislike when, rather than venture them, I give up the valuable assistance of Edwin to us in music. She did not print the farce, and we only read them as they stand crossed out in her MS. copy.

Her kind *little* manager did not dislike the fifth act of her comedy without showing how he conceived it might be made better. On the morning of the first of April he writes the following note about it:—

"Soho Square.

"MY DEAR MADAM,

"In the last page you will see my idea of the plan of this act. If you don't like it, or don't comprehend it, let me see you to-morrow, or Saturday, or Sunday morning; or come, if you can, at all events. If not, I hope at least to receive by the middle of next week the four first acts again—if not a new sketch of the fifth. I believe I shall go out

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of town to dinner on Sunday, and not return till Monday, which I mention to prevent your having any needless trouble. I most heartily wish you success, of which I think there can be no doubt.

"I am, dear Madam,

"Your very humble servant,

"GEO. COLMAN.

"Thursday night—I believe I may say Friday morning; and if I send you a foolish note, remember it is the *first of April!*"

She immediately went to work, and sent him her corrections, in conformity doubtless with his hints, and on the 20th again hears from him, and again strikes "another heat upon the Muse's anvil."

"Soho Square, April 20.

"Mr. Colman presents his compliments to Mrs. Inchbald, and returns the fifth act, begging her to look it over as revised; and, after any new graces she may bestow on it, to add the conclusion and send it back, that the transcript may be added to the rest of the copy."

We have at length done with revisions; and, as the reader sees, the manager has been a zealous friend to the production. He now shows himself ready also to stand godfather to her offspring.

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"DEAR MADAM,

"The licenser wants a title for your play: I have thought of a whimsical one, that I think will not displease you; and, if you will favour me with a call about eleven in the forenoon to-morrow or next day, 'I'll Tell You What!'

"Yours most faithfully,

"G. C."

"Soho Square."

She did not like the title, but she could not know the use he meant to make of it in the prologue and epilogue, with which he honoured the play. It perhaps sounds too *light* for the heavy part of the play, but agrees well with the *comic* portion, which is in our opinion by far the best, and always the most difficult to produce! As Johnson once said—"Give me a dying wife and two children, and I'll be pathetic myself." At length, with the declared admiration of the manager, which goes far in the Green Room, the comedy was read to the players the 13th of July, and Mrs. Inchbald was delighted at its uncommonly good reception. The cast consisted of the following performers:—

Mr. Euston, Mr. Parsons; *Mr. Antony Euston,* Mr. Bensley; *Sir George Euston,* Mr. Williamson; *Major Cyprus,* Mr. Palmer; *Sir Harry*

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Harmless, Mr. R. Palmer; *Colonel Downright,* Mr. Aickin; *Charles Euston,* Mr. Bannister, jun.; *Lady Harriot Cyprus,* Mrs. Bates; *Lady Euston,* Mrs. Bulkeley; *a Lady,* (*Mrs. Euston,*) Miss Farren; *Bloom,* Mrs. Frith.

Of all the preparatory flatteries we shall say nothing; Mrs. Inchbald had her full share we may be sure. The little manager pressed her to his *bosom,* though a rival author; and the performers pronounced *their* judgments, which commonly echo the manager's. She felt somewhat giddy, it is evident, from the following letters. But fortunately she possessed, in the late Francis Twiss, a friend whose discernment it was impossible to hoodwink, and whose integrity nothing could warp. His fair friend stood as clearly revealed to him in all her foibles as her merits; and he never spares her where he conceives she may be usefully admonished. Few authors ever had such a friend, still fewer would have *preserved* such letters: but she judged wisely; posterity have an interest in them. We shall not interrupt their succession by the narrative, but throw into notes what may at this distant period need explanation.

LETTERS RELATING TO HER FIRST COMEDY, 'I'LL TELL YOU WHAT,' FROM THE LATE FRANCIS TWISS, ESQ.

"'I'll tell you what,' my dear Muse, I perceive within me a most provoking propensity to pick

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your pocket of some of your Parnassian pence: that I may therefore produce profit to the Post-Office and pleasure to myself, I have prepared my pen to pester you with some of the pitiful productions of my poor pericranium. Now if this is not enough to sicken you of alliteration, the devil's in it: so never let me hear you admire such nonsense again. I suppose you will most cordially grudge the five-pence which this letter will cost you, especially as you have to buy your own Sunday's dinners;[1] but I wished to hear how you were going on, and what you were about: and I judged I stood but little chance of hearing from you, if I did not first put you in mind that I expect to receive a very long letter from you; not written in characters as large as your finger, but a sheet prettily filled with letters not much bigger than you are likely to make when you are composing any thing for your own use, on paper which you purchase yourself. Now this will be good economy too; for if you have a great deal to say, or, in other words, if you have a great many questions to ask,—which, in regard to you, is much the same thing,—one sheet of paper will contain what otherwise you must employ two for, or your restless curiosity must remain unsatisfied. Dreadful alternative! Now thank me for having put you in a way of amusing yourself,

[1] When he was in town Mrs. Inchbald usually dined with him on Sundays. How rationally they were passed, we have already mentioned.

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and, much more, of amusing me at so cheap a rate.

"You will take it for granted I have ere this heard from Dublin. Kemble has written me, as he says, the longest letter he ever honoured any person with. By the bye, I wish you 'd tell Patty that when such large letters come, it is much cheaper, and just as expeditious, to send them as a parcel by the coach. Kemble says, there are too many of the player-folks this year to make it "*worth their while:*" however, upwards of eighty pounds for his three first nights I think no bad thing; it is *not above* four times as much as you get for your whole summer:[1] he says he has done at least as well as any of them.

"The Hitchcocks have left Daly: *he* has opened a school, as Kemble says, 'to teach young gentlemen idleness and the brogue.' He seems in high spirits, which I attribute in some measure to his temperance and sobriety: I wish the good effects resulting thence may induce him to continue this plan. Mrs. Siddons has finished her engagement at Belfast with most uncommon *éclat*. The whole house was every night laid into boxes; and the *coup-d'œil* of a theatre, without a single hat in it, must at least, from its novelty, have been extremely pleasing. I rejoice to find

[1] Literally the fact. This lovely and highly-gifted lady received from George Colman the elder 30s. per week as an actress—Haymakers' wages in the Haymarket.

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that Fanny's summer is also likely to turn out very profitable to her. My brother is busy unpacking at York: till he is quite settled, he of course can see nobody; so that he is not yet able to give me any account of the inhabitants. I suppose he will say rude things, and quarrel with most of them before he has been there three months; however, if he will act so foolishly, he must take the consequences. From my present disposition I don't think it very probable that I shall pay him a visit this summer. 'Tis a long way to go, and to what end? I shall be tired to death in three days.

"I suppose I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again in about five weeks. The assizes are the 18th, and in the succeeding week Miss Brunton is engaged here for four nights at fifty pounds, so that I shall have an opportunity of forming my opinion before her appearance in London. My intention at present is, to take Standingfield again in my way home. As I came down I staid there from the Monday evening till the Friday noon, and passed my time very agreeably. The boys acted at Bury whilst I was there; but, having had a surfeit of plays, I thought it more amusing to wander about the fields. Mrs. Simpson[1] went, and her report is uncommonly favorable: the

[1] This was her brother George's wife, an actress. They were now living upon the farm that had been her mother's.

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Jaffier (Hayham) she speaks of as superior to any she ever saw, Barry excepted. I assure you she is a very notable farmer's wife — for ever bustling about the kitchen and poultry-yard; and, for trifles, custards, potted beef, &c. I do not know her equal. I was pleased to see her so much at home in a way of life entirely new to her. Your *future habitation*, at Goody Gill's, I walked past, as you bade me. I would much rather any body should live there than I: for *your* part, you would hang yourself in a week. No *heralds*, no *trunk-makers*,[1] no *Woodfall's Hasty Sketches* to dissipate the winter's gloom; for it is in winter only these places are intolerable. By the bye, the 'Public Advertiser' has abounded in theatricals this summer: I shall save them for our first Sunday afternoon on my return. Will you be so good as to call at my house, and send me the under-mentioned papers?

[1] Everybody remembers the 'Gallery Critic' of Mr. Addison, who *hammered* his approbation into the benches. He arose again about this time in the person of the Rev. Charles Este, and the 'Public Advertiser' was the medium of his good or ill report. Not that *he* ever knew a medium in any thing. His admiration of the greatest talent was enthusiastic; and, as his memory was excellent and taste good, he did not mislead by his praise. When he took to Kemble, for at first he did not like him, he signed his remarks PRO ROSCIO. He would sometimes almost *murder* by a pun. On the appearance of the Knights, Miss Farren's sister and her husband, he said simply, from King Lear—

"Things that love night, love not such Knights as these."

'The Beggar on Horseback' and 'Siege of Curzola' were pieces by O'Keefe, but not among his best.

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You will find them in my back-room above stairs. If Mosely has sent his pamphlet to my house, put it up with them: 'Morning Chronicle' of May 2, 3, 9, 16, 17, 27. Do them up in a parcel, and send them me by any of the coaches, and be sure to let me have a whole budget of your prittle-prattle.

"As nine nights have done up the 'Beggar on Horseback,' I take for granted it is good for nothing. From Colman's very dilatory plan of proceeding this summer, I think it is not improbable that I may be present at the first night of 'I'll Tell You What.' If it should come out before, you can only have my most hearty wishes for success; if not, to these shall be added, as far as they have any weight, the hands and voice of,

"My dear Muse, yours sincerely,

"FRANCIS TWISS."

"Norwich, July 10, 1785"

"P.S. Pray let me know *your* opinion of 'The Turk,' totally independent of all newspaper comments. Though the 'Beggar' is dismounted, and it is not likely I shall ever see him ride, I wish to know what kind of a horseman you think him. Does your comedy come out before 'The Siege of Curzola?'

"I hope you don't go without your dinner today."

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" Norwich.

" Though I scarcely know, my dear Muse, which way to turn myself during the bustle, and amidst the variety of engagements that press on every side this Assize week, I dare not disobey your injunctions to write to you immediately. The only method therefore in which it is possible for me to comply with your request, without interfering with other vocations, is, to rise an hour earlier than usual in the morning. Behold me then at 8 o'clock sitting down to acknowledge the receipt of the letter I was favoured with yesterday; a letter which has afforded me not only amusement but instruction, inasmuch as it has painted in the warmest colours the *vanity* attendant upon authors, females at least; and, by an open and unreserved communication of sentiments, clearly demonstrated that no description of persons whatever can carry that passion to greater lengths.

" This vanity, however, in you is not the actuating principle which directed your pen; for though self-*conceit* swam upon the surface, it required no great penetration to discover self-*interest* lurking at the bottom: vanity you perhaps thought the more reasonable of the two, and therefore brought it forward with less reserve: now, I am so well convinced of its innocence in this case, that I am ready to pronounce full absolution not only for this foible, but likewise for that so much nearer

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your heart, your *avarice*. You surely could not suppose that I should be able to read your letter without a violent fit of laughter: nay, I should not have desired better entertainment than the laugh I should have had at second hand, if I had seen you open an epistle upon a similar subject written by the author of *such* a play; or, indeed, I may almost say any play ('The School for Scandal' is no compliment to you!) in a similar style. Flattered, as I know every writer is, and ready to pay some attention to the favorable opinion, even of those least qualified to judge of his works, you have too much good sense, and (even in your own cause I trust) too much impartiality not to know that the players, in general, are the worst judges in the world of literary productions. For my part, I do not at this moment recollect any person in your theatre whom, either from his abilities, his education, or his acquaintance with the treasures of literature, I should deem competent to decide even with tolerable accuracy.[1] I may be mistaken; but my memory at the present moment does not permit me a single exemption from the

[1] He had forgotten Bensley, who was a gentleman and a *scholar;* but did not overflow with panegyric upon any occasion. He used to *glare* upon Kemble sometimes in the Green-room with a savage glee, while repeating a *caustic quotation from Horace*. As a military man, he knew the "right-hand file" of any description of troops. Kemble one afternoon passed his friend Bensley through a full-dress *exercise* of this kind in the Green-room with close resemblance and great effect. We wish it written down.

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sentence of incapacity I have, perhaps rashly, pronounced. On the other hand, in such matters, Colman is himself a host, if he will throw aside all prejudice, of which he has a very tolerable share. Of his son I say nothing, because I am not sufficiently acquainted with him.

"Now the report of the aforesaid George Colman is favorable, but I am sure he never uttered any of the nonsense which other people insulted you with, (for such extravagant eulogiums deserve no other name,) as he too well knows the difference between the 'School for Scandal' and 'I'll Tell You What!' However, let him express himself in what terms of commendation he will, (for that other high-flown stuff you must yourself know to be too ridiculous,) my opinion will not be changed on that account. Should it become the most popular piece on the stage, I should not be mortified, but rejoice on your account. I dare think for myself on every subject; and even the public delusion in regard to 'Figaro' and 'The Duenna,' will never make me have other than a mean opinion of them.

"Your piece does not sufficiently live in my memory to enable me to enter into a regular criticism. As to the language of the serious part, I again repeat, that what you call simple and unaffected,[1] I consider as low and grovelling; and that

[1] We confess we doubt her friend's taste a little when he thinks that *pathos* can be injured by humility of style. Intense anguish is

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the pathos of the scene (at least my feelings spoke so) is not a little impaired by the humility of the style. As for the rest, I think it a pretty, light, summer piece, likely to pay you very well for the time and anxiety you have undergone; for I have not a shadow of doubt resting on my mind relative to its success: yet, though I am bold enough to congratulate you at this moment on its favorable reception, (as if the dreadful trial were *past*,) I shall expect you will immediately let me know how things were; for though, I repeat, that I am sure it will succeed, I feel too much interest in what concerns you so nearly, not to wish for more authentic information; or, at least, information more favorable to the author than I can derive from the public prints.

never verbose; the *veræ voces pectore ab imo* are never sesquipedalian. "Low and grovelling!" We are afraid he would have expunged from the MS. of Shakspeare the very phrases that break the heart of the audience in Lear, because they come from one really broken by filial ingratitude:

"You see me here, you Gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age—wretched in both."

And again, with his last breath, Cordelia lying dead before him,—

"Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never.
Pray you undo this button. Thank you, sir.
Do you see *this*? Look on her! Look, her lips!
Look there, look there!"

Mrs. Inchbald happily persevered in her easy natural expression, and we have the '*Simple Story*.'

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"Once more, my dear Muse, I wish you joy, and am "Sincerely yours,

"FRANCIS TWISS."

"Mr. Harvey desires his love to you: he congratulates you on your piece, and wishes the public may be a little of your opinion in regard to its merits. I received the parcel safe; the particulars of that letter I have not at present room or leisure to answer. I shall be very impatient to hear of your success, though I know you have nothing to fear. Adieu, once more!

"Farewell! Remember me!"

"Norwich, Wednesday morning.

"I know not any circumstance, my dear Muse, which could have afforded me greater satisfaction than I received from the event of last Thursday evening. As a friend to genius and the proper use of talents in the cause of virtue and morality, I should have felt myself interested: but when those talents and that genius came recommended to me by merit, and a weight of private character with which, in this instance, I have the happiness to be acquainted, your success is as grateful to me as if my own reputation and interest had been at stake. With eagerness did I expect the arrival of the post on Saturday, hoping to have received information of a private nature, added to that which the public prints conveyed; but, though disappointed in this respect,

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the concurrent testimony of all the papers I saw gave me such real pleasure as almost atoned for my disappointment in the expectation of receiving a letter from you. The next day came, and again you had not written to me; so that, had I not recollected the weighty duties of an author in making slight alterations to prepare a piece for a second representation, I should have imagined your success had turned your little brain, and you had forgotten there was a person in Norwich who took so much interest in the fate of your comedy. On my return from the country, however, last night, I found that you had employed a few minutes of Sunday morning in giving way to your feelings on the occasion. My absence from town till after the post was gone out will, I trust, apologise for my not having sooner conveyed to you my compliments of congratulation. I know not whether I should have said compliments; for I assure you no person living participates more sincerely in the pleasure you without question feel at the present moment. May your fame with the public stand higher than you merit (now don't say that's impossible); may your benefit nights turn out as profitable as the theatre will admit; may your comedy be read and admired by all who read it; and may you pursue your inclination and talent for writing till you attain not only honour but wealth; may the manager continue, IF it gives you any pleasure, to

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'press you to his bosom!' Only figure to yourself the strange ideas which must have suggested themselves to my imagination at such a phrase! —the manager pressing you to his bosom! What part of you reaches his *bosom?* As I am tolerably acquainted with your stature and little Colman's, I can easily answer that question, but I won't give way to my fancy; I only remember 'tis you that have put such notions into my head, and you are of course answerable for the train of thoughts into which you have led me by making use of such expressions.

"You needed not to have informed me the lines you meant to quote from the Prologue were not exactly Mr. Colman's words, as there happens to be neither grammar nor sense in them; but no matter, I could make out some way or other what you mean. When you write to me again, which I expect to be almost immediately, pray don't think a page is filled with *eleven* lines, and a line with *six* words (and five of them monosyllables); but either write closer or make me pay double postage. Let me know how the piece is acted; for, though I am eager to see it, I am afraid it will be almost three weeks before I shall have that pleasure. You have, I know not why, taken it into your head that I think your comedy a *bad* one; I certainly do not think it a 'School for Scandal,' and therefore, most undoubtedly, shall be less hyperbolical in my praises than *some*

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of your friends have been; but, as I am not in the habit of commending in the extreme, if, to the alterations you have made since I saw it, I allow as much merit as you will find I did to the whole, (if you take the trouble of referring to the letter I wrote you when I returned your play, after having perused it,) I think you will have no reason to accuse me of withholding from you those eulogiums to which you have a claim, and perhaps something more.

"I have had another letter from Kemble. There are too many of them in Dublin to do any thing; but he fares at least as well as his neighbours, both as to profit and fame: but the discussion of this, and a thousand other subjects, I must reserve till I have the satisfaction of seeing you in town, which I hope will be before the expiration of this month.

"As I know your whole thoughts are at present engrossed by divorces, separate maintenances, &c., I think I shall oblige you by breaking off; so without *twaddling* any longer at present, I subscribe myself, dear Muse,

"Yours truly,

"FRANCIS TWISS."

"I saw your 'Mogul Tale' acted here about ten days ago.

"How the *Herald* has 'marred a curious tale in the telling!' Why did not you rather draw out a fable and send it to the papers, than

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suffer it to be mutilated in so wretchedly unintelligible a manner? Once more—

'Joy to thee, Altamont! Joy to myself!'

"Adieu! — Remember the consequence of drinking too much when your spirits are high."

"Norwich, Aug. 15th, 1785.

"I was sorry, my dear Mrs. Inchbald, to find by the *Herald* that your benefit night had turned out worse than any of the others. I at first gave but little credit to the paragraph, but I am afraid, from your silence on the subject, that it was too well founded. If so, I hope the event of last Saturday was more propitious, and you have my best wishes for your *third* night turning out still more profitable, if possible, than the former. Why don't you take your 'Mogul Tale'[1] on one of your nights? John Bull would like to see the person to whom he was indebted for his evening's entertainment; and you would be saluted with the loudest and (I think you will make little scruple of agreeing with me) the most merited applause you ever received in your life.

"I have not observed Mrs. Wells[2] to have acted lately: is she in the straw? Are your pro-

[1] This was adopted, as the reader will soon see, and with great effect.

[2] She was at this time living with Topham, and Mrs. Inchbald had paid the Captain the compliment of soliciting an epilogue from his pen. Young Colman had done the same thing. She was in better hands: Mr. Colman wrote that as well as the prologue.

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logue and epilogue good?—they are, I think, both little Colman's. I hope now soon to visit the Haymarket, and be a witness, as you say, of your triumphs. It is my intention at present to leave Norwich on Monday next, (pray let me hear from you before that time,) and to pass two or three days at Standingfield. If therefore nothing should intervene unexpectedly to detain me here, I shall most probably be in town on Friday se'nnight, and by that time I think you will scarce be gone into the country. By the bye, that going into the country is no bad piece of affectation; but now you are become a *great* personage, you know you may do as other great folks do. How long do you mean to stay at Standingfield? I suppose not above three or four days. Is Mrs. Hunt with you now in town, or does she defer her visit till your return?

"All these particulars I shall be glad to know; but remember that, if you don't write till Sunday, I shall have left Norwich before your letter arrives. If you should see any thing, by chance, of Patty, pray tell her to *keep* any letters that may arrive for me after Saturday next. Have you heard any thing of the Whitfields?—for I know nothing of theatres but from the papers, and I am almost sick, in them, of disputes about Henderson and Holman[1] carried on with the grossest in-

[1] This it should always be remembered was a war of their partizans and not of the actors themselves. Barwis was proud of his

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decencies on both sides between the *Trunkmaker* and (I suppose) Mr. Barwis. I have kept them all for your amusement, so 'no more of that' for the present. Was Mr. Palmer's *inability* to play the other night real or affected? I think he is too fond of acting to affect indisposition; and yet I don't well understand how the sting of a gnat should prevent his appearing on the stage: there seems to me some mystery in this; something more meant than meets the ear.

"However contradictory the newspapers may be on some occasions, in respect to you they are unanimous, and this is to no person more pleasing than to, yours truly,

"FRANCIS TWISS."

"August 20th, 1785.

"MY DEAR MRS. INCHBALD,

"When I entered the theatre this evening, I formed a resolution to be pleased where in reason I could be pleased; to pass over small

pupil, Este of his friend. The great honour of Holman's life was the liberality displayed by his college (Queen's, at Oxford). They did not consider either themselves or him disgraced by his being an actor.

As to his rival, a few short weeks left him nothing to regret but his *loss*. The truth was, that Henderson did not want either Romeo or Hamlet; and in the seniors of tragedy, and all ages of genuine comedy, Holman had no pretensions that could weigh, even with Soho, against him.

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defects without censure; and to applaud liberally wherever truth would bear me out. You will not, however, hence imagine that I was to put my understanding in my pocket, and praise, as is John Bull's custom, every part without discrimination. Though it was not my intention to have put my pen to paper on this subject, yet, as you hinted it would give you pleasure, I have thrown together a few loose remarks while the piece is forcibly impressed upon my mind.

"To begin then: having premised that I would not descend to minute cavils, I assure you that the three first acts of your comedy afforded me peculiar satisfaction: upon these I shall say nothing in the way of objection; for, though they are light, yet there runs through every scene a happy elegance that does you infinite credit. Of the latter part of the play I cannot, without disguising my sentiments, speak in terms of so warm commendation; for I see no reason to alter my opinion relative to the last scene of the fourth act; but must again repeat that, though the incident is a good one, and not ill managed, there is so great a poverty of style; the language creeps so along the ground, that the effect (and I speak as I *felt*) was in my breast literally none: yet I trust I have 'a tear for pity,' and must therefore impute your failing to excite my sensibility in favour of Mrs. Euston, not to my callous heart, but to

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the cause I have before assigned. We are now arrived at the fifth act; to which I am sorry to say I have many objections to make; though I do not know that I shall at this moment be able to recollect all which arose in my mind during the representation. To my having read your play in its original state am I indebted for understanding the disappointment of Major Cyprus, the masquerade affair, &c. &c.; for without that I most certainly should not have been able to develope what you seem determined should remain a mystery to the spectators of your play. Of the horns, which by the bye I think is new, you have made good use:[1] they have roused you into the neatest stroke in the piece; but that is in your way. Its opposite, and what is still better, and for which you cannot be commended too much, is your little discrimination between the

[1] "COLONEL.—*He* who sued for the divorce! Oh! that was it, was it? I understood you, you had planted *thorns* in the poor man; but you said *Horns*, I suppose.

5th Act.——MAJOR.—But, Mrs. Bloom, first order the French Horns up: I'm out of spirits, and want a tune. [*Exit* BLOOM.]

LADY HAR.—And do you suppose your *Horns* will disturb my repose? I shall like them of all things, they 'll *lull* me to sleep.

MAJOR.—Like them or not, I shall have them.

LADY HAR.—You shall—you *shall* have them. [*Exit* LADY H.

(The business proceeds, and the MAJOR sees at length something very *like* the fulfilment of his lady's threat, when MRS. BLOOM re-enters:)

BLOOM.—The *Horns* are ready, Sir,—would you like to *have* them?"

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tears of the two sexes:[1] those few lines alone would have been almost sufficient, had your comedy stood in need of such support, to have rescued it from severity. But I am now commending instead of censuring, and forget that I should give *justice* her due before I offer up my sacrifice on the altar of *generosity*. The 'tears' afford a good exit to Col. Downright; but as to the other characters then on the scene, you seem to have been in the situation of Mr. Puff, or you would never have driven them off the stage in so bungling a manner. Young Euston is not ill *introduced*, but his *dismission* is most shamefully abrupt; and this is an offence which, if I had *wept* at the tale of Mrs. Euston, I should have considered as unpardonable. I had almost forgotten to repeat the objection which I made to you before, and which I shall ever continue to make, to the character of Antony. If I analyse him rightly, you meant to hold him out as a man of honest, moral, *unfashionable* principles, tinctured with occasional severity, which sometimes deviates into moroseness. His soliloquy, however, when he is adding the codicil to his will—as

[1] "COLONEL.—I don't like to see a *woman* cry; but I can't bear to see a *man*; his tears come from so deep a source!—A *man's* tears always appear to have come a long journey; and therefore I notice them as strangers, that have gone through fatigue and trouble on their way;—while a *woman's* tears I consider as mere neighbours that can call upon you when they like, and generally drop in on all occasions."

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divesting him of all charity—holds him out as the most detestable of mankind; and I cannot conceive it possible for a human being seriously to reflect, as you make him do, that he is going to rush into the presence of his Maker, and utter so impious a sentence as that which you have put into his mouth. These are the little traits of a character which, though perhaps unperceived by the unthinking bulk of an audience, overturn the interests of morality and religion much more effectually than if such a feature had been more prominent on the canvass; for in that case every one would have started from it with horror. This you may possibly call preaching, but I consider it as a duty I owe to my God to reprobate every thing of this nature wherever I meet it. I do not expect that you will now make any alteration; but I shall consider myself to have gained a great point if, by what I have said, I shall deter you from administering, in your future productions, any more of that poison which is imperceptibly, indeed, taken in, but which never fails to work its passage till it undermines the very vitals of morality.[1]

"Of the acting, I can at present only say, that the chief part deserved praise; always, however,

[1] If Mr. Twiss had never written another sentence, by this alone he ought to acquire the respect and gratitude of mankind. We shall however not suffer it to blind us against the palpable injustice and cruelty of one that follows it.

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excepting Miss Farren, who is beyond all description despicable.[1] Such playing, however, is far beneath criticism, and I shall dismiss it immediately. I cannot conclude without congratulating you on having enriched the theatre with a play of considerable merit, and offering you my warmest wishes for your success in your future labours. I am, dear Muse, yours sincerely,

"FRANCIS TWISS."

During the time allowed the actors for studying the parts, Parsons, who had been cast in Mr. Euston,—a character which is never thought on by the author, but to open her first, third and fourth acts,—began to feel himself a little out of his element. He was quite eclipsed by brother Antony, (as he himself remarks;) and, though he begins the piece with *humour*, is not mixed up essentially in the business. If Parsons's character did not convulse the house with laughter, he was better out of the piece. The objection was got over, I suppose, by Colman; for he acted the part throughout. Bensley, Palmer, and Aickin were incom-

[1] The *comédie larmoyante* was not suited to her. Nature had dressed her countenance in *smiles*, and her beautiful features looked *sullen* in grave expression. But a graceful figure, fine manners, good sense, and the practice of the stage must always save their possessor from being *despicable*. Her comedy, though not near Mrs. Abington's in the *beau monde*, was far superior to any thing else, and displayed the *gaiety of refinement*. Since her time it has never been equalled, and only *approached* by Miss Duncan.

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parable; Williamson looked like a gentleman. The ladies were all clever women, and did the author justice. Mrs. Inchbald had her third, sixth, and ninth nights, in the good old style, at this little theatre, and on the 24th of September Mr. Colman gave her a draft for £300 as their proceeds. But he declined to purchase her copyright. Kemble was now come over from Dublin, and we may imagine the triumph with which the *Muse* and the *supporters to her arms*, Twiss and Kemble, walked into the city on the 5th of October to purchase stock with the bulk of her treasure. She bought £400 in the 3 per cents, as low then as 60½, for which she paid £242. 10*s*.

On the two last nights of representation this season at the Haymarket, she adopted Twiss's hint, and in the 'Mogul Tale' showed herself in Selima, as the lovely and ingenious woman whose brain had supplied the whole evening's amusement. We had not at this day adopted the French absurdity of calling either for the name or person of an author who succeeds; but the moment she made her appearance she was welcomed with shouts of applause that lasted some minutes:

> "Some thunder 'Bravo,' and some gaze and bless her!
> Young maidens wave their kerchiefs, and old women
> Silently weep for joy."

She was actress enough to perform the authoress properly on this occasion, and enjoy the sensation she had excited with seeming humility, but proud delight. She had sent a second farce to Mr. Col-

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man, called 'Appearance is against them;' this, however, he had declined, and she transferred it to Mr. Harris, who was of so opposite an opinion, that he called himself, the very day after he got it, to say how *charmed* he was with it. On the 4th of October it was rehearsed, and played on the 22nd. The King commanded it; the Prince of Wales went to see it. Dive called to buy her benefit night with the usual £100; and she sold her copy-right for £30 more. She was hard at work on another comedy, well remembering the adage—

> "We must take the current when it serves,
> Or lose our ventures."

We have already said that Mr. Colman would not buy the copy-right of 'I'll Tell You What;' and having thus a right to publish it, she knew that a play when printed could be acted any where; she accordingly thought this might be done for her benefit with her farce at Covent-Garden theatre, and that without any favour in the business. She wrote to Jewell, Colman's treasurer, on the subject, who, poor fellow, knew no more of such secrets than the manager pleased; and her letter drew from Mr. Colman the following in reply:—

"Soho Square, Nov. 29th, 1785.

"MADAM,

"I am very sorry that you took the trouble to write a long letter to Mr. Jewell on a

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subject that had been so fully discussed at our last meeting. Your right to your own property I never disputed; but knew that, were your play even in print, neither of the theatres could in honour represent it, without my concurrence, during the present season. I was quite sure they would not attempt it: but, your right out of the question, I have no objection to its being done one night for your benefit, though I think it ought to be notified that it is to be on that occasion only, and *that* with my consent and approbation.

"I am, as I ever have been, Madam, your real well-wisher, and most humble servant,

"G. COLMAN."

It will be obvious that he thought his fair friend somewhat *keen* after emolument, and not sufficiently mindful of his fostering care of her offspring. Her mind had been strongly excited this whole year; the pains in her head were excessive, and she was subject to faintings, as likely to proceed from exhaustion as worry. With all her thirst for money, she practised the greatest liberality. She seems to have sent her MS. *herself* for the use of the Bath manager. The Bonnors were Palmer's assistants, both in his theatre and the post-office, which owes to him the admirable mail-coach plan. The Bonnors were very excellent people, and extremely amiable in their manners.

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CHAPTER X.

The Morells kept a Faro-table in Hart Street—She dines with Mr. Twiss every Sunday—In the evening Kemble and he give readings—The residences of performers in past times—Peter Pindar wooes the Muse — An honorable lover, Mr. Glover, offers marriage, a carriage, and a settlement of £500 a year—She vainly preferred Sir Charles Bunbury—Mr. Twiss marries Miss Kemble—Relieves her brother George Simpson—Dramatic concerns—Haymarket season—Hayley's Plays in rhyme—Author's esteem for Hayley—'The Widow's Vow'—Its success—Robinson buys her 'I'll Tell You What'—City again—Buys £200 5 per Cent. Stock—Begins to *grow* upon the Manager—Asked to write a pantomime—'Such Things Are'—Buys during the run of it £18 per annum Long Annuities, for which she pays £4101. 2*s*. —Howard now in this country—Odd coincidence with Haswell in the play—Does the 'Midnight Hour'—Buys £200 3 per Cents, and £200 5 per Cents Stock—A hurried Comedy fails—Visits her friends in Suffolk—Mrs. Wells—Topham, Este, 'The World' newspaper—Her lovers or friends seldom apart.

In the preceding chapter, we did not interrupt her proceedings as a writer for the stage by any references to her private life. She continued to lodge with the Morells in Hart Street, who, she found, kept a Faro table. They, however, treated her with very friendly politeness, and she frequently dined with them. Her Sundays, when

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he was in town, she passed uniformly with Mr. Twiss, and the readings as uniformly took place. Nor were these frequently ill appropriated to the day. Kemble once read to them a sermon by Dr. Parr. Mrs. Inchbald, without reference to the particular church of which she was a member, read the Bible steadily throughout; so that she may be said to have lived in a state very far from indifference to her highest duties. Practically to be of no public communion, is dangerous, as we are told by Johnson,—and, as showing no example, is pernicious; but she was in her closet, at least cultivating her mind, and no doubt often resolving to be quite right.

She had her sister Dolly to reside with her during the Haymarket season. We suppose in this recess of the patent theatres, the greater part of her visitors migrated into the country. Mrs. and Miss Farren seem to call frequently upon her, and in the summer Mrs. Wells often dined with her; Topham himself occasionally. We do not find any objection to this lady raised by Twiss, who appears to look carefully into Mrs. Inchbald's society. Thus for instance, finding Sir Charles Bunbury very troublesome, he told her 'she must *forbid* him her house:' she replied that she would see him *once more* and dismiss him: but he besieged her door, and forced himself up stairs, in spite of the servants. At last she would only receive her

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friend Davis. That was the most irrefragable test of her purity. Davis passed every door, like the director of spiritual concerns;—it is true he decided those *most* important of a corporal nature. While in London, he never omitted his daily visits to Mrs. Inchbald, and took at least one meal with her. When he was in Edinburgh or Dublin, she frequently wrote to him; and, as he used to say, "Next to that immortal man, the *late* Mr. Garrick, Mrs. Inchbald was *lord* of the ascendant."

The neighbourhood of the theatres, fifty years ago, was thought to furnish the most convenient residences for the members of the profession. As but few of the ladies kept their carriages, they were seen about five o'clock with their maids or younger sisters going between the Strand, or Bloomsbury, or Great Queen Street, or the contiguous streets, Great Russell and King Street, and Bow Street with its paved courts, and the stage-doors of their respective theatres — from which, well wrapped up in their cloaks, and not disdaining even the vulgar *clogs* upon their feet, they, at a later hour (not, however, one in the morning,) hurried home through crowded and even dirty streets to lodgings such as their circumstances would afford. *Nous avons changé tout cela.*

Poor Ledger, were he alive again, could never *post* through a fifth part of the calls to rehearsal, that would take him to Brompton instead of his

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bed at midnight. Mrs. Inchbald was decidedly of the old school; and so when the host of *Pharaoh* drove her from Morells' in Hart Street, consumptive as she was, she put herself down in Great Russell Street, Covent Garden, at the house of a Mrs. Hall, which she was much pleased with. This house had formerly been Button's Coffee-house, founded by Addison in favour of one Button, who had been many years a domestic in the Warwick family. The memory of Sir Roger de Coverley must have been inspiration to so vivid a fancy as Mrs. Inchbald's. She had the happiness now of having her door eternally besieged, and a large majority of her callers determined to see her, if she was within; so that she was obliged to lock herself rigidly up when she had any business of either composition or transcription to get through. Of her male friends, the greater portion were decidedly in love with her; and among these Dr. Wolcot, the celebrated Peter Pindar, amused her equally with his humour and his love, which was always of the *glowing* temperament. Perhaps there is nothing in Secundus himself better than the following tetrasticks, which we attribute to him:—

"TO ELIZA.

"Eliza, when with female art
You seem to shun, and yet pursue,
You act a false, a soul-less part,
Unworthy love, unworthy you.

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Reluctance kills the rising bliss;
Half-granted favours I disdain:
The honey'd lips that I would kiss,
Are gall, unless they kiss again.

No passive love, that silent takes
All I can give without return:
Be mine the frame that passion shakes;
The liquid eye, the lips that burn.

Desires that mantle in the face,
Wishes that wait not to be won,
The living dying, rapt embrace,—
Give these delights, or give me none."

But among this herd of admirers, the year 1786 presented one gentleman of fortune, who knew his own mind, and had well studied hers; to whom neither the number nor the conditions in life of her relations raised any objection, and who had determined to carry the prize if his hand and fortune would obtain it. This was a Mr. Glover, who became acquainted with her in the first year of her widowhood at Hull, and followed her to York. She had since that time seen nothing of him; but he had not lost sight of her; and now, convinced that her genius was on a par with her virtue and her beauty, he proposed marriage to her on the 4th of September, and repeated the offer on the 10th. Why she hesitated, we shall venture soon to guess. The party was unexceptionable—kept a carriage, and offered that charming accompaniment a settlement of £500 a year. But she liked Sir Charles Bunbury better; and a

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union with him would give her rank, fashionable acquaintance, presentation at Court, and the daily intercourse of an accomplished mind. We are afraid he aimed to carry her unconditionally—perhaps did not fully know how far he might be tempted rather than lose her. He pursued, however, his old forcing, fashionable course through the year. She could not resolve to break with him, because she entertained hopes; and he, though often *serious*, was never so determined as to propose in form to the charmer. Kemble she at all times liked well enough to *take* him; but he never proposed: yet he had no objection at last to one widow, and probably would not have borne in a wife the rather *haggard* temper, which Mrs. Inchbald could not but show at intervals—besides, her *family* we are sure he would not have allowed to be about her. Twiss had for many years been the liberal friend, and indeed patron of her brother George, and regularly visited her relations when he went to Norwich; but *he* does not seem to have thought that she was *exactly* such a wife as he wished: at length his great affection for Kemble, and the "parts and graces" of his sister Frances, made him determine to offer his hand to that excellent lady; and on the 1st of May, she made him as happy as beauty, virtue, and much cultivation, could render a grave, principled, and religious gentleman of the old school. During the honeymoon, Mrs. Inchbald passed one Sunday

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with them, and in July received an invitation from them *both*, to resume her old habit of passing her Sundays at their house; which she accepted gracefully and gladly. Mr. and Mrs. Pope also, on their marriage, wedded their *single* delight in Mrs. Inchbald's society; and she dined frequently in Half-Moon Street. Once she appears to have dined with Mrs. Siddons, who had hardly a day to herself and her *old* friends; however, her son Harry, and his *uncle* Charles Kemble, (who was a year *younger* than himself,) then very promising boys of twelve and eleven years old, were frequent visitors to Mrs. Inchbald; as were old Mr. and Mrs. Kemble, the parents of people so dear to her. It would be tiresome to go through the mere list of names of *authors*, who triumphed in her *success*, and *actors* by her *invention*—Ireland, Scotland, and the provincial towns of England, all sent up their travellers to her door, and they were all courteously received.

Her brother George's affairs had gone miserably on this year, till he was relieved by Mr. Twiss. George Inchbald too failed in every thing, and was a perfect pest to his indulgent stepmother. She had given him presents of five guineas at a time, but could not support him; he then became *insolent*, on which she told him never to trouble her again with his company.

These domestic concerns of the year being out of our way, we now resume the course of her

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theatrical pursuits. Her performances on the stage are neither more important than heretofore, nor better paid. She walks in the pantomime, and acts in 'Omai;' and at the Haymarket performs in the tragedy of 'Lord Russell' by Hayley, and 'The Two Connoisseurs,' one of his comedies in rhyme. Mr. Hayley is now forgotten, and the *intense* school have taken place of a man who had ten times their knowledge and learning and taste. Fairly, nothing but Pope stands before him as an *essayist in rhyme*. What, after 'The Rape of the Lock,' can be read *but* 'The Triumphs of Temper,' in the *Heroi-comic?* Who has ever furnished such illustrations as his *notes* on epic poetry supply, with his masterly *specimens* and *analyses* of Dante and Ercilla? What is neater or more amusing than his comedies in rhyme? True, it was absurd to think of a *medium* of stage communication so remote from the rhythm of common speech, and *that* during the progress of ludicrous occurrences, and displays of character. The actors seemed to be hampered by the rhyme, and could really not commit such a load of jingle to memory; but in the closet they must be amusing to the rational. *Liberavi animam meam.*

Mrs. Inchbald's next production was a farce called 'The Widow's Vow.' Mr. Colman, although slightly nettled at the close of last year, was really disposed to serve her; and, as soon as he knew that she had finished it, desired her to

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send it to him at Bath, which she did on the 5th of March. He accepted it readily, for the subject had already succeeded in France, being in fact *L'heureuse Erreur* of M. Patrat. The business arises from an ambiguity of sex, and the incidents were exactly suited to the humour of Mrs. Inchbald. It was read to the Haymarket company on the 3rd of June; the season commenced on the 9th, and on the 20th it was performed with great success. The 6th night was that of her benefit. We subjoin Mr. Colman's letters respecting it—every way pleasing:—

"Bath, March 8th, 1786.

"DEAR MADAM,

"I have just run over your farce, and think I never received or read any piece on which I could so immediately and decidedly pronounce that it would *do;* and do, as I think, with little or no alteration. But did you never hear that the *man supposed to be a woman* was one of the leading incidents in Mr. Sheridan's 'Foresters?' It seems indeed to have been a kind of family *subject,* for his own sister, Mrs. Lefanu, wrote and produced a farce on the Irish stage, called 'The Ambiguous Lover.' I have read the farce, but do not think the subject so happily conducted as in your little drama.

"There is, I think, no want of songs, though I half wish that *Jerome* had been of consequence enough to have made a part for Edwin; and yet

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I am afraid to injure the piece by proposing any variation or departure from its present pleasantry and simplicity. 'The Vow,' I think, is better in Spain than in England. The opening is exactly 'The Carmelite' in farce.[1] *Eighteen months* and *twenty years* is all the difference, except that there is an absurdity in the tragedy and not in farce.

"The right title would be Lingo's toast, 'May the *masculine* never be *neuter* to the *feminine* gender!' But seriously, what do you think of christening it 'The *Neuter*'—a title that suits the subject and yet conceals the plot? But of this hereafter: in the mean time I *thank* you, and already venture to give you joy of your success.

"Yours most sincerely,

"GEO. COLMAN."

"DEAR MADAM,

"Though I cannot account for your *panics*, and think I am no unlucky godfather, e'en christen your child after your own liking; and be assured that I will still remain a sponsor for its success, in spite of the terrors of your *friends*. But why would you write so much about it and about it? Call it what you please, but call me, and believe me,

"Your real well-wisher and humble servant,

"GEO. COLMAN."

[1] The 'Carmelite' was a tragedy by Cumberland; finely acted by Mrs. Siddons and Kemble. It was very attractive.

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In July she had the pleasure to handle the *gold* she had received for her paper currency; for George Robinson bought her comedy of 'I'll Tell You What,' as well as her farce; and Colman paid her for her sixth night with that readiness, which seems a steady feature of the house, under all its changes, and to the present hour. On the 1st of August, therefore, she was equipped for the city, and paid her friendly broker Morgan £228. 15*s.* for £200. 5 per cent. stock, at 114 per cent. She renewed her 'Widow's Vow' to devote every power of her intellect to acquire an independence —to buy in, but never sell out of the funds.

We have before lamented the uncertainty as to *what* comedy or farce she was writing; the next she produced was deferred till the following year. But she now began to consider herself of the family of the *sure-cards;* and when Harris sent Dive to her for her *play,* she returned him a refusal, until a seven-years article was signed with her as an actress. This was on the 5th of May. On the 1st of June Mr. Lewis wrote to her, by the patentee's desire, for her comedy, and an opera that she had made, some progress in. She did not send either; and on the 11th, Lewis called to tell her she was *discharged,* unless she sent the comedy to Mr. Harris. She now began to fear that she had swaggered to her prejudice; but, to her relief, and very unexpectedly, he came again two days after, and she saw decidedly

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that they would be glad to come to terms with her. But it was the end of the year before the play was quite to the manager's mind, copied with all its alterations, and delivered into his hands.

Though pantomime had produced all the *bitters* of her theatrical life, Dive, on the part of his friend Harris, came to her in April to request that she would write him a pantomime; but she never derived any *sweets* from that source; and we should think the request itself an ill-natured retort. She however went on with her opera, and resumed her "own Life," which she finished with the year. A farce, called 'The Necklace,' was at that time before her; but it may have changed its name, and been acted subsequently, though we do not think so. Her health during the year 1786 had been very indifferent, and she suffered continually from head-ach, sickness, and faintness. She lived in the second floor of the house that had been Button's, and never forgot the *wit* that once flowed under her apartment, though she too seldom remembered the *aids* by which Addison and his friends supported it.

The close of the year 1786 was remarkable for an offence she had taken at some lapse of the gentle Davis, and he was *never to come again:* but the following March he made his appearance with the twittering swallow, and picked up his usual comforts at her sparing table.

The year 1787 was every way fortunate to Mrs.

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Inchbald. Harris had secured her comedy in the negociation of last year. He saw that he had a fine game before him, and was extremely anxious to play it perfectly. As late as the beginning of February, alterations continued to be made, and on Saturday the 10th it was performed the first time. Andrews, the laureate of 'The Dripping Family,' supplied Mrs. Mattocks with an epilogue, which she delivered amid outrageous laughter. The house was crowded to excess. "The play was received," says its author, "with uncommon applause;" and she adds, "I was happy beyond expression."

The great popularity of this piece, and the celebrity of its author, allow us to expatiate moderately upon its merits.

'Such Things Are' is a play founded upon the most respectable character that this nation has ever numbered among her sons—that of the benevolent Howard. Perhaps no other dramatist would, or could, have introduced him into a play, which was to divert as well as to refine an audience. Vulgarity, broad farce, would have sullied the deep interests of humanity: there would have been no bearing the slightest contact in the production of a coarse mind. Mrs. Inchbald alternates, and even mixes her gaiety with her pathos; and the tear is scarcely dry, when you are summoned and willing to join in the most irresistible merriment.

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We shall venture a very slight sketch of this, her greatest dramatic achievement. Sir Luke and Lady Tremor are living in the dominions of the Sultan, at Sumatra in the East Indies. To their protection the Honorable Mr. Twineall is sent out, avowedly with the object of making his fortune by working on the foibles of all those to whom he can acquire an access. He no sooner arrives than he meets with a friend named Meanright, who, being on his return to Europe, leaves Twineall his lesson as to the family who have received him: but, despising the meanness of systematic flattery, he describes them by opposites to their real qualities; and this is a fertile source of the most risible mistakes, and some embarrassing dilemmas.

The serious incidents arise from the Sultan's being actually a bold and lucky usurper, and only *resembling* him whom he assumes to be. From apprehension alone, his prisons are crowded with captives; and among these, benevolence, in the person of Mr. Haswell, presses to examine their condition and mitigate their sufferings, even to the paying of their ransom, though he finds other means of working on the feelings of the Sultan. This gaol-delivery is the most affecting triumph, not only of *justice*, but of virtues far less stern, and better suited to the fallible creature man.

Haswell was performed by Pope, the Sultan by

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Farren, the Honorable Mr. Twineall by Lewis, and the Tremors by Quick and Mrs. Mattocks.

But we must exhibit some of the striking points of the business, that it may appear how original and profound this great woman was in her art, and how highly she merited the rewards that awaited her genius. While Howard, by his double, Mr. Haswell, is braving the inclemency and darkness of the prison dungeons, a slave steals his pocket-book, and finds in it the means of purchasing his liberty by paying the required ransom. To be rid of every suspicion of being the thief, he throws himself in the way of Haswell upon his return from the dungeon; and, attracting the notice of the philanthropist, receives his bounty and promises of aid. Nature in a moment bursts through the villany which slavery had taught her; he throws himself upon his knees before Haswell, and with convulsive emotion restores the pocket-book. The effect was electric. Fearon, a rough but valuable man, struck it by his action into every heart; and Mrs. Inchbald must have trembled under the severe delight of applause that never was exceeded in a theatre.

Of the Tremors we must explain that the husband is a trembling coward, who ran away in a battle; and the wife a vulgar nobody, who got a spouse by a voyage to India for the express purpose. Twineall is told by his friend, that Sir

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Luke delights in *war* and martial achievement; and that his lady sees no merit without *high birth* —that she is a descendant from one of the Malcolms, king of Scotland, a *wig* of whose wearing is actually in her possession. The way in which Lewis at length approached this *caul*, and the way in which he was *heard* by Mrs. Mattocks, it was impossible to exceed. Twineall, among his dilemmas, is accused by Lord Flint of rebel opinions of the Sultan. We consequently find the flattering fribble consigned to a prison, where he politely "cannot think of going *before* his gaoler;" and bitterly laments "that he should die in such a *dress*" as that which a malefactor is condemned to wear. Quite equal to any of these was the philosophy of the lady, when her husband's leg was scalded—"He might be happy in such an opportunity of *showing* it."

Mrs. Pope sustained the sorrows of Arabella, who is discovered to be the Sultan's wife, sought by himself in vain—Holman, those of Elvirus, who mingles very naturally the true hero with the affectionate son. So much for the first night.

Mr. Robinson bought her copy-right (as he did every thing) liberally, on the Monday following. Their Majesties ordered the play on the sixth night, Monday the 19th, and, with the three Princesses, were greatly delighted. Mrs. Inchbald saw Bow Street full of people that could not get in to see her play. She estimated that it

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produced her £900; and it might be so, if she received any presents which it might be improper to minute down. However, she bought into the Funds, during the run of the play, £18 a-year in the Long Annuities only, for which she paid £410. 12*s*.

It was not a little curious, and showed on what a full sea of fortune Mrs. Inchbald's present bark floated, that precisely at this juncture the hero of her drama, Mr. Howard himself, arrived in this country; and as nothing of the fortuitous can much astonish when fortune is in her frolics, Mr. Howard, as he came in the coach from Canterbury, was *robbed* of his papers in manuscript, and of several *jewels* in the case that contained them. But the gentlemen of the road were not in the track to be converted by Fearon—yet, at times, *such things are*. We do not know them to have been restored to the *real* philanthropist.

Whether this was the time that Harris, in imitation of his quondam partner, the lesser Colman, pressed the fair muse to *his* bosom, is not specified in her diary; but he came in the month of March, and pressed upon her 'Guerre Ouverte,' or, 'Ruse contre Ruse.' She undertook the translation, or adaptation; for she used her original always freely on such occasions: and, after reflecting a week, began to naturalize it in English. By the 24th of April it was completed, copied out, and in Mr. Harris's hands. In three days he

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let her know that he accepted and greatly admired it. They called it 'The Midnight Hour:' it was ordered into rehearsal, and given to the public, with the loudest applause, on the 22nd of May, during the time that her sister Bigsby was upon a visit to her.

Mr. Harris's letter to her on this subject will show his attention to business, and the *tact* he had acquired from long practice:—

"Be satisfied you have done the translation excellently. I approve, very much, every thing but your criticisms. Be assured nothing can be more comic than the Marquis's entrance in disguise, while all the group are assembled to prevent him. The watch-word, &c. is all absolutely necessary to illustrate the character of Nicholas. Rely that the whole is so excellently constructed, that any mutilation of business would essentially injure. I also am clear 'tis too full of bustle and intrigue for a musical piece. It will be much best to keep it in three acts, and it will not be too long—not longer than 'Catherine and Petruchio.'

"The business appears to me as clear as need be, and I have no doubt you find it so. I am satisfied that you, and Lewis and Richards, (whom I would have you immediately consult,) will form the last scene, so as to make the business striking, and the general effect excellent.

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"I request as a favour that it may be produced with all possible dispatch: I have many urgent reasons for wishing it; not the least of which is, being satisfied that some one must lay hands on it and ruin it for our use.

"All you have to do is to get a prologue, which must say much of its great celebrity in Paris;—and I think you finish rather too abruptly. The Marquis, Julia, and the General, certainly should have each one more speech. N. B. Surely the deaf porter should ask if he should run and call the Marchioness, according to the original.

"Above all things, it is essential to us to get Lewis to do the Marquis; and I think Mrs. Wells should do Julia. The piece will then be admirably acted, and, I doubt not, will succeed capitally.

"N. B. If T.'s farce succeeds, I mean it shall be done after this, on the same nights; and to be preceded by one of our interludes—'Rose and Colin,' &c. But if otherwise, it (yours) will follow very well one of Billington's operas.

"I shall certainly be in town long enough before this can be produced. You have done well to lay the scene in Spain. Look at a map for a maritime Spanish town. Would not Cadiz do, or Barcelona? I think it might be called, 'All Fair; or, the Wager Won.' Farewell!

"T. HARRIS."

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She was here very unconsciously driven into a rivalry with a writer of fashion, though she herself was the fashionable writer. Lady Wallace had translated the same piece; and when she published, complained of being forestalled. The complaint was idle: she could have no exclusive right to M. Damaniant's comedy: besides, she rendered it less entertaining by being more literal. Mrs. Inchbald knew how to use her materials.

Her friend Mac Mahon met with a similar disappointment, and bore it like the high-bred gentleman he was known to be on all occasions. *Ecce signum*:—

"MADAM,

"It was but yesterday I was informed, by an advertisement from Covent-Garden Theatre, that you had undertaken to produce 'Guerre Ouverte' in an English dress. The French author must be proud of this circumstance; but I cannot help acquainting you with the strange fate that hath, of late, presided over my literary undertakings—if I can dignify with that name the weak attempts of a pen by no means practised, in a career which you have run over with so much fame to yourself and credit to the British drama. 'Richard Cœur-de-Lion' I had ready by me, when it was announced for representation; and now, the translation of 'Ruse contre Ruse' remains useless on my hands.

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"Indeed, Madam, I question much whether you could be acquitted at the tribunal of Apollo, were an action entered there against you for thus forestalling every this kind of literary production, and, by your improving manner of making them your own, compel the original writers to exclaim in the words of Voltaire, speaking of a translation made of one of his works, 'Ah, la charmante voleuse! qu'elle m'a bien embelli!' All this may be very well for your reputation; but is it not sufficiently established? and are you not ashamed to hoard up such plentiful crops, without leaving a single ear to be gleaned by the half-starved tribe of inferior writers?

"Joke apart, Madam, be assured that it is with the greatest pleasure I resign my pretensions, and have already committed to the care of my snuff-man a copy; which he may as well enjoy in MS., as he most probably must have done in print, had it ever obtained the honours of the press. Though there is no great merit in a sacrifice by which the lovers of theatrical exhibitions, and of course the public in general, must be benefited; yet give me leave to insist on one condition—namely, that you will favour me with a printed copy of 'The Midnight Hour,' which cannot fail of being heard with delight when it is struck by you.

"I remain, with the highest respect, Madam, your most obedient very humble servant,

"PARKYNS M'MAHON."

"81, Haymarket."

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Quick, a General now who does not *run*, has a niece whom he designs to marry to a rich Indian at twelve o'clock that very night. Lewis, a young Marquis, bets half his estate that he carries off the young lady with her own consent, in spite of all generalship. The bet is accepted by the uncle, who yields his consent to the match if he is outwitted. Julia, the niece, was performed by Mrs. Wells; and her maid by Mrs. Brown, who, somewhat late in life, was brought to *romp* it against the Jordan. Edwin acted the General's servant, and Pocket-book Fearon was the Cerberus porter of the mansion. Lewis carried off the lady and the piece with his inimitable pleasantry.

'The Midnight Hour' produced the English charmer £130; and she therefore brought forth another rouleau or two from 'Such Things Are,' and, in addition to her Long Annuities, bought £200 Three per cents. at 71½, and £200 in the Five per cents. at 114 per cent. These purchases took more than £370 out of her cabinet; and she loved always to have a few guineas applicable upon any great emergency. And here it would have been well if her dramatic adventures had closed on this most auspicious year; but Harris had little confidence in any manufacture but her own; and accordingly, her old friend—who at length discovered that there were writers who composed better than they spelt, as well as myriads who could spell and never composed a decent line—

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came in the month of September, and absolutely forced from her the comedy which the sagacious Colman had discovered was too slight even for summer wearing. The play was acted on the 15th of December. The author was behind, and fearfully anticipated its condemnation. It was withdrawn on the first night. Lewis told her frankly, before it came out, that *he* did not like it; however, Harris preferred it to the comedy she was composing all the summer, and he could not have chosen worse. However, the year did not close before he was again importuning her to do a French piece for him in her manner. Le Texier was to get it for him from Paris, as soon as possible; and the greatest hopes were entertained of its success, from the subject.

In the April and October of this year of wonders, she went for a few days only into Suffolk to see her friends—drank her chocolate with Sir Thomas and Lady Gage—and remembered her old habit of attending the Catholic service at Coldham. Success could not spoil a heart like hers. She never forgot, or neglected her near connexions, nor considered their professions discreditable to a votress of the Muse. Her sister Hunt's husband was a tailor; and Mr. Frank Hunt, her cousin's husband, a carpenter. Her cousin used occasionally to go on her trifling errands, and sometimes dined with her. Her sister Dolly this year was not in London.

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Of her female friends, Mrs. Whitfield seems to have occupied the first place most decidedly this year: they could hardly pass a day apart, and they lived near each other. Notwithstanding this decided preference, they had frequent disputes, and sometimes violent differences; but they were usually slept off, and treated as dreams "signifying nothing." Her next favourite was decidedly Mrs. Wells, who stood her ground notwithstanding the discreditable mode of her living with Topham. They sometimes proposed a separation; and it often, we confess, surprised us to hear of the connexion: it could proceed from no impure sympathy, or even indifference to worldly maxims, on the part of Mrs. Inchbald. She was above all suspicion herself, and her friend greatly below it. Topham himself was rather welcome to her than otherwise; besides, he was a critic, and in the year 1787, with the Rev. Charles Este, and John Bell for ballast to the vessel, started a most diverting daily paper called 'The World.' Bell had made some improvements in printing; and the new journal, which was sold with the others at three-pence, took a higher tone than that of the diurnal press. Its conductors, Topham and Este, had been brought up at Eton and Westminster; the latter gentleman was a well-read clergyman, one of the royal chaplains, a man of science also, and great mental and personal activity. The printer of the paper never *saw* him:

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all day he was *every where* that a gentleman of taste could be; and the harvest he had gleaned was every night deposited in the letter-box. From Dr. Johnson he contracted a fondness for *tea*, that was remarkable. We have known him write for hours without a symptom of hesitation or weariness; and his penmanship was of great beauty. He left nothing for his printer to supply: he marked his small capitals and italics, and breaks; and his style was as pointed and quaint, as his matter was erudite and original. He had the usual contempt of an academic for writers who had graduated only in Grub Street, and took to the pen before they had conquered the spelling-book. He called the rival papers the LOW prints; an epithet which did not allow its antithesis to be the retort. Low enough they were in taste and style, and also in their sources of intelligence; and their paper and type were upon a par with the chronicles of the Old Bailey. Topham, who had "land and beeves," had commanded a troop of the Guards; so that the cloth was fully secured by the sabre: besides, he was a magistrate in two counties. The paper rose like a balloon, from being lighter than the vulgar air about it; and while the conductors continued friends, they made a fortune by it. As Mrs. Wells had an engagement at Covent-Garden, the superior management of that theatre was the clearest thing in the world; and Drury-Lane had

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lost "half its soul" in the elder Palmer, who had opened the Royalty. Kemble, utterly unsustained, (for Mrs. Siddons was extremely ill,) was acting Lord Gayville in 'The Heiress,' and touching the gay fine gentleman like a doctor of the Sorbonne. Mrs. Inchbald did not see much of him; for Twiss this year carried his lovely wife and child to reside in Devonshire, and Kemble finally proposed to the widow of poor Brereton, and married her at the close of it. Mrs. Inchbald was the *Muse* herself in Topham's *world* of fashion, and her attachment to Mrs. Wells we may be sure did not injure her genius, or her virtue, in the estimation of its writers. Este, in private life, was strictly decorous; but he made allowance for a man of the *world*, and remembered his Virgil as to the people of Saturn:—

> "Saturni gentem, haud vinclo nec legibus æquam,
> Sponte suâ, veterisque Dei se more tenentem."
> ÆN. VII. v. 202.

> "Self-will'd, they placed all *law* upon the shelf,
> And lived as *loosely* as their God himself."
> COTTON MSS.

There was no reason to court *hostility* by assuming austerity; and when the ladies had agreed in September to drop all intimacy, the intercourse was renewed by the desire of Mrs. Inchbald, as she candidly confesses. One is apt to wonder that our fair widow did not discover a probable defeat of her highest hopes, a second marriage, as

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the sure result of this latitude in female connexions. As to Sir Charles Bunbury, whenever he was in town he came to her door three or four times every week, and was as often repelled as endured; but he resolved to persevere in asserting his right to see her,—

> "Nor from that right to part an hour,
> Smile she or low'r."

Davis, too, was a faithful follower not to be discarded. Among her callers we find old Bellamy, who was publishing a life of her, with her portrait, in a magazine. As he came several times on this business, we have considered her to authorise what he has stated of her early life, and have received such particulars as are not at variance with her written *diary;* which is higher authority than the best recollections that can be supplied in conversation, though held for the express purpose of giving correct materials to a friend whom she trusted. Among the male visitors this year, of note, we find, Dr. Kennedy, Dr. Moore ('Zeluco'), Mr. Nares, Mr. Andrews, Mr. Harris, M. Le Texier, the Woodfalls, and, of theatrical people, every body of professional and private value.

Mr. Glover, though rejected, came with the gales of vernal and autumnal equinoxes, thrice in each, to her door; which he found always open to him, as a gentleman who had honoured her by his addresses, and was entitled to her lasting esteem.

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CHAPTER XI.

Fate of the 'Hue and Cry'—'Animal Magnetism,' its profits—Le Texier—'The Child of Nature'—Removes to Frith Street—Dr. Warren; greatly admires him — Her near connexions — The Whitfields—Female Glee—Mr. Babb visits Rome—Spring of 1789—Close of her Covent-Garden engagement—Colman's season: acts there but once—Re-engagement offered by Mr. Harris, refused: retrenchment in consequence—Horace Walpole, Gen. Conway—Recovery of the King—Public reception of the Queen —'The Married Man'—Her two novels; combines them in one story—Davis—Holcroft's bad advice: Mrs. Broadhead's—'The World'—Topham and Este—Mr. Hastings—Mrs. Wells imitates the Impeachment—Mrs. Inchbald has her fortune told—Her illness in 1790 — Dr. Warren's kindness — Sells her 'Simple Story' to George Robinson—Sundry adventures—Sits to Russel, the crayon painter.

The French piece which Mr. Harris had brought for her translation was rendered into English at the close of January, 1788, and returned for alterations; these being read, the Covent-Garden manager made up his opinion, and refused to accept it. Nothing disconcerted by rejection, in February she sent it to Mr. Colman, and against the grain it was read in the Haymarket in the

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mouth of August. The 'Hue and Cry' was the title prefixed to this play, though it would have been better placed *after* it. When at length it was done, three years after, for some benefit, it failed, as may be readily imagined; for what can be expected in the way of effect from a drama refused by the managers both summer and winter, and in its very original flimsy? However, Le Texier soon followed with the 'Animal Magnetism' he was to get from Paris. On the 3rd of March Mrs. Inchbald began her task; on the 19th she finished it, and placed it in Mr. Harris's hands the day following: it was put in rehearsal and brought out with all possible celerity, and met with the greatest applause. Le Texier had himself very excellent judgment in these matters; and, besides using his connexions with Paris to purvey for Harris, he had his own transcendent French *readings* in Lisle Street to enliven, with any popular novelty from the French wits; who, though unequal to Molière, were many of them writers of ready invention and lively parts, and all of them turned to *structure* in their performances, and working by a regular plan to a reasonable catastrophe. The comedy of 'Animal Magnetism' produced her, she says, one hundred and thirty pounds. Le Texier this year brought her, on his own account, a piece to translate: she finished it for him, and we suppose he paid her for her labours, but she says nothing more about it. In Sep-

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tember Mr. Harris was again at her door with a French comedy for her to prepare for his theatre; it was the fascinating 'Child of Nature,' taken from the 'Zelis' of Madame Genlis. No time was to be lost; she immediately locked herself up, closed her shutters, and was denied to every human being till she had completed her translation in four acts. In ten days this indefatigable spirit accomplished it, and on the 11th of September wrote to Mr. Harris stating her terms. They met afterwards to consult about the cast of it. She pursued her other designs without an hour's pause; but on the 11th of November the 'Child of Nature' was read, and brought out on the 28th of the month with the greatest effect, and to the entire satisfaction of the author. Mr. Dive was sent to offer her terms about it: she went to rehearsal at twelve o'clock, and there had high words with Mr. Harris upon the subject. She left the house in anger. Lewis, however, followed her home, and settled the affair to her mind. How it happened I cannot say, but her payment for this piece, fifty pounds, was much below what had previously been given for 'The Midnight Hour' and 'Animal Magnetism.' Perhaps there was some middle person whom the manager had also to pay, and he might have learned to consider mere translation as intitled but to slender remuneration. The habit was now confirmed among us of looking entirely to French

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invention, and managers grew cold to the actual produce of the British Minerva.

She this year quitted her lodgings in Great Russell Street, and in October removed to new ones at Mr. Grist's in Frith Street, Soho. She was there near to her friend Bannister, who had taken the house No. 4, in that street, on his marriage with Miss Harpur. Amid her unceasing labours she had very indifferent health, and in 1788 added a very distressing face-ache to her other complaints. With her usual humility and absence from all importance, she called at Dr. Warren's house for his advice, and thus commenced one of her most *interesting* friendships. Her female expression was, "he behaved sweetly:" but no man saw farther into character than Dr. Warren; he became one of her divinities at last.

Her near connexions were this year excessively troublesome to her. Her sister Dolly had been residing at Standingfield, but their brother George had gone wrong in his affairs, and there was an end to that accommodation for her: she came accordingly to London, to live as she *could* for a time, chiefly we may be sure upon her sister Inchbald. Debby, who was prettier than Mrs. Inchbald, and lived, perhaps as bar-maid, with a Mr. Luttrel, called upon her occasionally; sometimes she got money from her, at others was refused admission. The two sons of her excellent husband besieged her by letter; but she refused to

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see either of them this year. John Hunt, her sister's husband, had died in the month of April; there was nothing in relation to her thriving, but *herself.*

She passed her leisure time this year, if she could be said to have any, chiefly with her friends the Whitfields: they went together in May to Epsom races, Mrs. Whitfield's brother, Mr. Lane, residing with her till he left England on a voyage to India.

The reader will smile at the girlish, or shall we say *boyish,* folly of the following memorandum; but Mrs. Inchbald's amiable character needs no management; we are sure never to despise her. "On the 29th of June (Sunday) dined, drank tea, and supped with Mrs. Whitfield. At *dark,* she and I and her son William walked out. I rapped at doors in New Street and King Street and ran away." We are afraid Gray's ghostly prudes would here exclaim, "Jesu Maria, Madam Bridget, she's five-and-thirty to a minute!"

Whether the month of August saw her in higher glee or more tasteful amusement we will not decide; but she, Mrs. Whitfield, her sister Hunt and Nancy did not disdain to drink tea together in that place of vulgar resort, Bagnigge Wells, the exact character of which they did not, in all probability, entirely comprehend. Mrs. Inch-

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bald and her friends dined together as usual on Sundays with Mr. Babb, who had now come to Little Holland House, Kensington, and who, in the month of October, set out on a journey to Rome.

Mrs. Inchbald saw Mrs. Wells and Topham but little this year. Taylor and his wife both called upon her; Vaughan and Buckton, and Wolcot and M. Le Texier and Mr. Harris were frequent *rappers* at her door, and did *not* run away; and Sir Charles Bunbury and the gentle Davis persevered in their assiduities. The Kembles and she were less intimate than before. She saw nothing of the Twisses. Mr. M. is noticed by her to call most while her sister Dolly was with her; and to be more intimate with *her* than was altogether seemly.

The following year, 1789, brought in the spring season the close of her Covent-Garden engagement, and on the 20th of June she received her discharge. Her engagement in the summer with Mr. Colman went on; but as an actress she did nothing for her salary: she performed but once in his season, and that was in her own farce, 'The Mogul Tale.' On the 31st of August Le Texier called with proposals for a renewal of her Covent-Garden engagement, which she had the spirit to decline; having now by her purchases in the funds

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realised an annual income of fifty-eight pounds. She began what she calls her *poverty* week on the 19th of September, by vacating the dining-room of her lodgings and confining herself to the second floor, and resolved to labour steadily on as a dramatic writer, and receive nothing as a courtesy from any manager.

We must review these labours in their order, commencing with the month of February, 1789, which saw her translating a piece for the Haymarket; but M. Le Texier brought her one to render for *him*, (a certainty); so she put her own aside, and completed his by the 7th of March. On the 30th M. Le Texier brought her a letter from Horace Walpole in relation to it, and paid her as for his own affair. She had called it 'The Contrast.' This opens to us a little *finesse* in dramatic history, and removes the Right Hon. Henry Seymour Conway from any more than nominal claims as a dramatist.

Of the two pieces which she had now translated for Le Texier, we feel confident that one was 'Les Dehors Trompeurs' of Mons. Boissy, called by Conway 'False Appearances,' and first acted at Richmond House, and thence transferred to Drury-Lane theatre, published with a dedication to Miss Farren, and an epilogue by General Burgoyne. For any purposes of his *own*, Le Texier could want no translation into English; it was the *short cut* to production for some MAN OF RANK, who wanted to

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pay a timely compliment to a set of noble performers. Mrs. Damer performed in it; Horace Walpole writes about it; and he could only be interested for the persons above named. Lord Derby acted the chief character, and Fitzgerald the Marquis. These were the brilliant days of the Whigs; and in taste and splendour, their amusements neither feared, nor indeed expected rivalry. When the recovery of the King suddenly closed upon them their prospect of power under the Regent; and the Queen with her champion, Mr. Pitt, exhibited that persistive constancy in duty, which is reverenced even in failure, and all but adored in success. On the 15th of April Mrs. Inchbald went to Covent-Garden Theatre to see the first appearance in public of Her Majesty, accompanied by the three eldest Princesses. Their reception was affecting, perhaps beyond parallel: she was at a house in St. Paul's Church-yard also when the King went in procession to St. Paul's, and saw the whole of the arrangements with great delight. It is to be remembered that in spite of occasional leanings to what are called *liberal* notions, she at all times cherished a personal love for the Royal Family.

We resume her dramatic occupations. The piece she was rendering for Colman, was 'Le Philosophe Marié' of Destouches: she finished this on the 5th of April, and sent it to him on the 15th. On the 17th she received from her kind

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manager the following letter: it displays the restless anxiety she felt about every effort of her pen.

"Richmond, April 16th, 1789.

"Indeed, my dear Madam, I am rather surprised at your repeated declarations concerning the little drama you have sent me. It appears to me, on the first reading, both entertaining and interesting; with more rain and sun-shine than the month in which I write, hitherto proverbial, has this year exhibited. Some alterations, however, especially in the part of Sir John, (I don't like the name of Classic,) will I think be material. Early in the next week I shall be in town, and hope to see you in the course of it, and to assure you that I will, on this occasion, as usual, do all in my power to 'Speed the Plough,' and to convince you that I am, Dear Madam,

"Your faithful and obedient

"GEO. COLMAN.

"You have not communicated the French title, nor supplied any other. There have occurred to me three:—'The Perplexed Husband'—'The Perplexed Couple'—'The Married Man.' The last, I believe, is the *very thing*."

Mr. Colman, as usual with him, suggested alterations, and his fair friend's piece was read to the company on the 1st of July. While it was in rehearsal Mr. Holcroft called upon her, and

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advised her to *withdraw* it. The ground of this advice does not appear: what he said seems to have fortunately been disregarded, for on the 15th of the month it was produced with great success, and she was in a condition to pay Mr. Whitfield fifty pounds for some French piece which he had obtained for her. With Robinson's money for the copy-right, which was no great matter for *summer* plays, she cleared one hundred pounds by 'The Married Man,' a title which Colman saw to be the very thing.

She had been more than a year employed, when she had no pressure of temporary translations, in writing a comedy, which at length she completed to her mind, and laid it up in store; showing it however to Kemble, who made her happy by the encouragement of his approbation. In addition to her dramatic studies, she had commenced two novels, on which she laboured as she found herself in the vein. She had begun to copy her work on the 2nd of July, when on the 25th she first thought of joining her two novels into one story. The conception was productive of more labour; but she laughed at the toil of common mortals, and successfully combined them. We shall speak more particularly on this subject when we arrive at the moment of projection, and see Mr. Robinson the purchaser of 'The Simple Story,' and Woodfall, and then Cooper, the printers of it. In truth, she had abundant calls made upon her

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industry, by some whom she would not refuse: her sister Debby often supplicated her assistance, which was given graciously at all times; once a watch was presented as well as her purse. It should be remembered that with this sister's conduct Mrs. Inchbald was far from being satisfied.

During the first four months of the year Davis came as usual, and often supped with her; but on the 26th of April Mrs. Wells called to inform her of some "*shocking* circumstance of Davis's behaviour." She wrote to him the next day; but he arrived before the letter reached him, and "she *forbad* him her house FOR EVER." The 28th brought her a farewell letter from the offender. He had probably been indiscreet, and revealed some of those more than Eleusinian mysteries which surround the toilet of beauty,—

"And whisper'd whence she stole those balmy spoils."

Mr. Holcroft had been of great assistance to her while composing her novel. The reader has already seen that he wished her to withdraw 'The Married Man' from the Haymarket while it was in rehearsal; it succeeded abundantly, in the teeth of the adviser. Whether Mrs. Inchbald suspected him to be disingenuous, we know not, but in the month following we find some very unpleasant notices in her diary relating to her literary friend. On the 10th of August, while correcting her novel by his suggestions, she says,

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"Received a very passionate and supplicating letter from Mr. Holcroft." To this we have, "Received another letter, with my own back, from Mr. Holcroft." His son called for the letters from his father, which were delivered to him, and the intercourse dropped, at least for a time.

The return of Mr. Babb from Italy in June renewed their Sunday dinners at Little Holland House. The Whitfields and Mrs. Inchbald continued their friendly intercourse, and we find that on the 10th of July Mr. and Mrs. Kemble, with Mrs. Whitfield and Mrs. Inchbald, took a fish dinner at *Billingsgate* together; returned by water, and drank tea at Mr. Kemble's in Caroline Street. Mr. Kemble was now manager of Drury-Lane theatre; but he was not too great for happiness, and loved the comfortable dinner and unaffected cheerfulness to be found only among equals. Stephen Kemble and his wife continued to call upon her, and her old list of notables, until the contraction of her lodgings made them discontinue what in her state of inconvenience was productive of more pain than pleasure.

The notoriety of 'The World' and its conductors led Mrs. Broadhead into some sort of acquaintance with Mrs. Wells, who brought from that lady to Mrs. Inchbald an invitation to her masquerade, which she attended this year; and, as a more awful masquerade, she several times, in the spring, exhibited herself at Westminster Hall to admire the

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injured patience of Mr. Hastings, and the graceful obeisances of the Peers to the vacant throne. She, we are confident, must have still more delighted in the astonishing *imitations* of her friend Mrs. Wells, who, let loose by Topham upon the *managers* of the Impeachment, was so irresistible in her sallies, that it was difficult to listen *gravely* to the orators, whose action, and utterance, and kinds of eloquence she exhibited wherever she could find an opportunity. We remember that, beautiful as she then was, she gave more than a glimpse of the lion-like majesty of Thurlow, the sneer that accompanied the submission of Burke, and the brogue that enriched his reluctant acquiescence. In Anstruther she became the shadow of a shade; and, as the two assistants of the managers, served up Francis, and Richard Burke in a style of greedy hatred, that could be seen no where else. We have heard her even touch the indignant confutation of Law, (the late Lord Ellenborough,) the loud darings of Plumer, and the classical sweetness of Dallas. That such genius should end in—but we must forbear; it would be painful to *us*, as well as to others, to proceed.

In the month of October this year she took the stage to Bury, to visit her sister Bigsby. She had invitations to Lady Gage's and Lady Blake's; sat with them at the theatre, and received the most flattering attentions from all who were known to her. She rode behind her nephew,

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George Huggins to the Bury stage, and made out her week's excursion very pleasantly by a safe arrival in London on Thursday evening.

On the 30th of November she records with proper gravity, that Mrs. Grist, (her landlady,) Miss Hemet, (the daughter of the dentist,) and she herself, as *curious* as either, went into the city and had their fortunes told. We think the Nostradamus of that day was a fellow who was called Jones; and he lived, rather ominously to be sure, in the Old Bailey. She has not afforded us the test of false prophecy—an accurate statement of its revelations, written down at the time, and compared with the actual events that in due order succeeded. The jaunt, however, did not seem to agree with her; for, on the following day, she reports herself to be "not very well;" she continued thus to the 5th of December, when her report was "*ill*, very ill." She lay in bed two days, and became so extremely unwell that she sent for her apothecary. On his arrival, the 8th of December, her journal breaks off. She was certainly too ill to continue it; and thus closed the year 1789.

The year 1790 thus opened upon our charming friend a dismal suspension of her labours, and January "was wasted fourteen days" before Dr. Warren pronounced her disorder quite gone, and she sat up three hours. The day following she dressed; and on Sunday, the 17th, sat

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up the greater part of the day. The following week, however, showed a new symptom of disease in a painful abscess, which had formed itself in her leg: this removed, rather than excited, apprehension. Her physician absolutely won her heart by his kindness: he called as a friend, and occasionally brought in his carriage a little game for her acceptance. The merit of her character seems to have been irresistible. It was the beginning of March before she could take a change of air; then, however, she removed to her friend Mr. Babb's residence, Little Holland House, Kensington, for a fortnight. She walked in the garden as much as her strength would permit, and was carefully attended by Mrs. Evans, the housekeeper of her friend, who himself was in town till dinner-time; but on his return brought with him such friends as were either mutual, or whose company he considered as likely to amuse her. She did something, however trifling, to employ her pen; made alterations in 'The Contrast,' and ruminated upon her novel. However, on the 15th, she would be detained no longer from *home*, and returned to her lodgings. The word thus given with an emphasis should not be left to the reader's fancy. The *home* of Mrs. Inchbald, in Frith Street, was a single room up two pair of stairs, in which she sat with her shutters closed, that her attention might be rigidly confined to her business; and in this apartment she

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received the far greater part of her visitors: when persons of superior rank, or whom she chose to treat with ceremony, came, she had arranged that they should be shown into the drawing-room, and she went down stairs to them. The first annoyance that met her on her return, was the disgraceful and violent conduct of her sister Debby, whom she was compelled to keep from want, though she would not see her when she called. She wrote to her sister Dolly and to Lady Gage to try what could be done as to provision for her.

On the 18th of March, having finished 'The Contrast,' she returned it to M. Le Texier, for whom she also translated a pamphlet. She then took up her novel, 'The Simple Story,' for completion on the new idea she had conceived; finished, transcribed, and sold it to Mr. Robinson; received the first proof from the printer Woodfall on the 11th of November; but his newspaper seems to have caused delay in the progress, and she transferred her work to Cooper, who completed it. Thus her time was sufficiently and profitably occupied: she lived within the slender limits she assigned herself, and dined out frequently, either with Mr. Babb, or the publisher of her novel, with John Bannister, her stock-broker Morgan, or the Whitfields. In going one day to the house of the latter, she met with what she calls an *adventure*—that is, a strange admirer, who tires you into a walking acquaintance with

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him; nor would he quit her till she had promised to meet him again, which she avoided by going out too late. Ladies are fond of any passing tribute to their attractions. She mentions yet another, as Mrs. Whitfield and she went in the stage to Chiswick. When they were crossing the ferry they fell into company with a very *elegant* man, (we use her own epithet,) who walked with them to Mr. Woodfall's house at Barnes, after having, in the most *interesting* manner, shown them the church, and other objects attractive in the route. She was quite delighted with Woodfall's place, then in luxuriant beauty.

Her sister-in-law Mrs. Simpson paid her a short visit alone in passing through London, and Mrs. Inchbald devoted the day to her amusement with great pleasure to herself. On the 24th of September she and her husband came to London together, and Mrs. Inchbald was much with them while they staid at Charing Cross.

This year she sat for her portrait to Mr. Russell, the crayon painter, at this time in the highest vogue. In point of likeness, he never, we think, failed, and there was great sweetness in his manner. The almost innumerable portraits from his crayon are now vanished; but he painted an *immortal* Topham in all the *whiskered* energy of composition; a pen (whiskered also) in the right hand, and the Life of old Elwes before him; and a fac-

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simile, very elegant indeed, of the showy, captivating John Palmer, who, "take him for all in all," was the most unrivalled actor of modern times: he *could* approach a lady, bow to her, and seat himself gracefully in her presence. We have had dancing-masters in great profusion since his time; but such deportment they have either not known or never taught. He walked the stage in a manner peculiarly calculated to occupy it by his figure and action, with a measured and rather lingering step.

Her friend Mrs. Wells came, in one of her flights, to lodge in the same house with her; but she left Mrs. Grist's drawing-room in July, and Miss Hemet having lost her father, the dentist, was happy in the opportunity of being under the same roof with Mrs. Inchbald, who remained there the whole year. Her landlady was sometimes out of favour with the *Muse* for ringing her bell in the morning to get the servant up; but, though irritable, she was soon appeased, where the offender showed general kindness.

Among her readings this year we shall notice her delight in 'Burke's Reflections;' 'Rousseau's Confessions,' of which she began a translation, but desisted after a time; 'Bruce's Source of the Nile;' 'Rasselas,' and some other works. She read also some German plays, at the desire of a native of Germany; but they yielded no fruit at

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this time. She was busied upon a comedy on which she built great hopes; time only can inform us the probable name of it.

Robinson was to pay her two hundred pounds for the 'Simple Story,' of which we shall speak at large in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER XII.

The 'Simple Story'—Sketch of it—Connexion of its two parts suggested by 'The Winter's Tale'—Striking passages in the novel—The character of Dorriforth—Her premonition to the second part—Rousseau's 'Emile'—Establishes herself as one of the greatest ornaments of her sex.

We are now arrived at the production which bears the highest testimony to the genius of Mrs. Inchbald. There are still living men of strong minds, who speak sincerely when they affirm her 'Simple Story' to be yet unequalled. We conceive her interest, however, to be any thing but *simple*, in any inferential use of that word. It is a story complicated with powerful character and the strongest passions; operating with a force that becomes irresistible and destructive; such too as could be found only in the peculiar connexion imagined by the author, and the *Catholic* profession of the leading personage.

"Dorriforth," says an amiable critic, "is a Romish priest of a lofty mind, generous, and endued with strong sensibilities." When such a

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character gives himself up to celibacy, we are to expect that nature in him will some way *suffer* by the sacrifice. He becomes *stern* and *inflexible;* because, having commanded his own tendencies, he exacts from others the same performance of *duty*, however painful; and he literally avenges his own deprivations, when he punishes the errors or vacillations of those around him.

The death of a relation opens his succession to a peerage. The continuation of a Catholic peerage in England is thought so important to the See of Rome that the Pope readily dispenses with the vows of the priest; and opens to him a field for the exercise of his sensibilities, which, did nothing occur to counteract them, would in time considerably abate his sternness and inflexibility. By the death of a beloved friend, he becomes the guardian to his daughter; and by her father's will she is to reside under the roof of her guardian. She is a Protestant and fond of pleasure; gay, volatile, and indiscreet: one who fancies beauty to be a *law* as well as a charm, and thus expects the readiest obedience to her will the moment it is announced. The author has inspired these two persons with a mutual passion. Perhaps they were the least suited to each other that could well be imagined. It was impossible for Dorriforth to approve the levity of Miss Milner, and she was apt to consider indulgence as the only *real* demon-

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stration of love. The lover at last determines upon a foreign tour, and the destined moment of his *departure* is, by the most dramatic incident in the piece, rendered that of his *union* to the agitated ward.

Here again we have to notice the *Catholic* principle that pervades the interest. The tutor and bosom friend of Dorriforth is a Jesuit of profound discernment and rational attachment. He sees prophetically the mischiefs threatened by such an union, and systematically throws every impediment in the way of it, while there is a chance of success. But at the decisive moment, seeing his patron linger, unable to tear himself away, Sandford exclaims, "Separate this moment, or resolve to be separated only by death." He then stepped aside to a book-case, and taking thence 'The Offices of the Church,' opened the *marriage ceremonies*, and they were on their knees before him. He explains himself very affectingly to them both, and joins their hands. Cold indeed must be the bosom that does not sympathise with the bride, when she sees the carriage that was to bear her lover for ever from her arms drive away empty from the door.

Such is the first grand division of her story. The happiness of the lovers seems boundless; but, aware that she intended to change all "such notes for tragic," the author has borrowed a hint from superstition to prepare the minds of her

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readers, and concludes the volume with the following alarm of her heroine: "Looking on the ring, which Lord Elmwood had put upon her finger in haste when he married her, she perceived it to be a *mourning ring*."

To an actress like Mrs. Inchbald, the 'Winter's Tale' of Shakspeare was well known: she had probably acted both the Mother and the Daughter of that romantic drama, and remembered the expedient fallen upon by the poet to *slide over sixteen years*, till the Perdita has become nubile, whom, as an infant, we had seen cast out by its jealous and savage father.[1] But our dexterous authoress has had the address to conceal that she follows a *precedent*, rather than invents an escape; and sinks the same interval in her novel that the poet had done in his play, with a graceful ease of expression quite peculiar to herself. We cannot resist the pleasure of laying it before the reader, in case he should have forgotten the language:—

"Not any event throughout life can arrest the

[1] TIME is here the speaker, addressing the audience:—

"Impute it not a crime
To me, or my swift passage, that I slide
O'er *sixteen years*, and leave the growth untried
Of that wide gap; since it is in my power
To o'erthrow law, and in one self-born hour
To plant and o'erwhelm custom. This allowing,
I turn my glass, and give my scene such growing,
As you had slept between."

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reflection of a thoughtful mind more powerfully, or leave so lasting an impression, as that of returning to a place after a few years' absence, and observing an entire alteration in respect to all the persons who once formed the neighbourhood. To find that many who, but a few years before, were left in their bloom of youth and health, are dead; to find that children left at school are married and have children of their own; that some, who were left in riches, are reduced to poverty; that others, who were in poverty, have become rich; to find those once renowned for virtue, now detested for vice; roving husbands grown constant; constant husbands become rovers; the firmest friends changed into the most implacable enemies; beauty faded; in a word, every change to demonstrate that—

"All
Is transitory on this side the grave."

"Guided by a wish that the reflecting reader may experience the sensation which an attention to circumstances like these must excite, he is desired to imagine *seventeen years elapsed*, since he has seen or heard of any of those persons who, in the foregoing volume, have been introduced to his acquaintance; and then, supposing himself at the period of those seventeen years, follow the sequel of their history."

It will now be proper to show the parallel pas-

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sages in the precedent we have pointed out. Time makes the spectator acquainted with the changes which he had operated upon the characters:

> "Leontes leaving
> The effects of his fond jealousies, so grieving
> That he shuts up himself."

"Dorriforth—the pious, the good, the tender Dorriforth—is become a hard-hearted tyrant."

"The beautiful, the beloved Miss Milner is no longer beautiful, no longer beloved, no longer—tremble while you read it!—no longer *virtuous*."

Again, we must listen to our friend *Time*:

> "Remember well
> I mentioned a son of the King's, which Florizel
> I now name to you."

So Mrs. Inchbald—"The boy Rushbrook is become a man; thus noticed because, like Florizel, he is the destined husband of *her* Perdita, the daughter of Lady Elmwood."

Hermione addresses Leontes from the tomb, which returns her again to life and love, and her daughter, beautiful and happy, is at her feet. Lady Elmwood, sunk into the grave of disgrace and despair, recommends her Perdita by *letter* to her father's protection.

Miss Woodley is graced with all the kind affections of Paulina. This is the way that genius kindles at the flame of preceding genius, and thus it was that Milton read and followed Homer.

The real business of the second part is opened

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by the death-bed of Lady Elmwood, and we cannot refuse ourselves another glance at a picture, worked up with inimitable power and gracefulness:

"On the other side of the bed sits Sandford; his hair grown white, his face wrinkled with age, his heart the same as ever;—the reprover, the enemy of the vain, the idle, and the wicked; but the friend and comforter of the forlorn and miserable.

"Upon those features, where sarcasm, reproach, and anger dwelt, to threaten and alarm the sinner; mildness, tenderness, and pity beamed, to support and console the penitent; compassion changed his language, and softened all those harsh tones that used to denounce perdition."

Let us listen to the venerable man:

"'In the name of God! Lady Elmwood, of that God who suffered for you, and, suffering, knew and pitied all our weaknesses—by HIM, who has given his word to *take compassion on the sinner's tears*, I bid you hope for mercy!—by that *innocence* in which you once lived, be comforted! by the *sorrows* you have known since your degradation, hope that, in some measure, you have atoned!—by the *sincerity* that shone upon your youthful face when I joined your hands, and those thousand virtues you have since given proofs of, trust that you were not born *to die the death of the wicked!*'

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"As he spoke these words of consolation, her trembling hand clasped his; her dying eyes darted a ray of brightness, but her failing voice endeavoured in vain to articulate: at length, fixing her looks upon her daughter, as their last dear object, she was just understood to utter the word, 'Father.'

"'I understand you,' replied Sandford; 'and by all that influence I ever had over him, by my prayers, my tears,' and they flowed as he spoke, 'I will implore him to own his child.' She could now only smile in thanks.

"'And if I should fail,' continued he, 'yet, while I live, she shall not want a friend or protector—all an old man like me can answer for.' —Here his tears interrupted him.

"Lady Elmwood was sufficiently sensible of his words and their import, to make a sign as if she wished to embrace him: but finding life leaving her fast, she reserved this last token of love for her daughter; with a struggle she lifted herself from her pillow, clung to her child, and died in her arms."

As Langhorne enjoined, upon the impersonation of *Hope*, in Collins:

> "Relegat, qui semel percurrit;
> Qui nunquam legit, legat."

The excellent Sandford enters upon his mission; but his former pupil is now mature; he is become a peer, and to the importance of his sta-

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tion, adds a keen and implacable resentment towards all who have injured him. However, with the most masterly address, he places a letter from his deceased lady in his hand, and we follow Lord Elmwood into his chamber, read her dying address as he reads it, and observe its effect as pride and resentment struggle with the remembrance of former affection, and the horror of the grave. The farewell which closes it is both original and terrific:

"Farewell, Dorriforth! farewell, Lord Elmwood! and before you throw this letter from you with contempt or anger, cast your imagination into the grave, where I am lying! reflect upon all the days of my past life,—the anxious moments I have known, and what has been their end! Behold *me*, also! In my altered face there is no anxiety, no joy or sorrow;—all is over! my whole frame is motionless, my heart beats no more!—Look at my horrid habitation too, and ask yourself whether I am an object of resentment!"

It obtains the mother's object; Lady Matilda, accompanied by Miss Woodley, is permitted to reside at Elmwood Castle, under the express condition that she is never to come into her father's presence, nor be brought to his remembrance by any rash allusion to her, from sympathy or even mere accident: whoever infringes this stipulation, he solemnly vows never to forgive to his dying day. Even to Sandford himself he says, "I am

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not to be controlled as formerly; my temper is changed of late—changed to what it was originally, till your religious precepts reformed it. You may remember how troublesome it was to conquer my stubborn disposition in my youth; *then*, indeed, you *did*; but in my more advanced age you will find the task too difficult. I have a sincere regard for you, and should be loth, at these years, to quarrel with you seriously."

Under the "stinted courtesy" of such protection, Lady Matilda and Miss Woodley reside at Elmwood Castle. His Lordship meets with an accident, and his leg is dreadfully crushed by a fall from his horse. His daughter in her own apartments hears of his state, and suffers more in her circumstances than the most fondled child would do, who had access to her parent's chamber. At one time he fevers, and Sandford, who seldom quitted his apartment, expected that he would at length desire to see his child; but he expected it in vain.

He recovers rapidly, and accident at length places that daughter on the staircase with her father; in this unexpected dilemma she utters a scream of terror, catches at the balustrades for support, misses them and falls motionless into her father's arms.

What would the reader expect from so fortunate an occurrence?

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Mrs. Inchbald shall inform him, in her own terms:

"He caught her, as by the same impulse he would have caught any other person falling for want of aid; yet, when he found her in his arms, he still held her there—gazed on her attentively, and once pressed her to his bosom."

Nature has still some more struggles for his pride; for as he is breaking away from the snare into which he had fallen, his daughter opens her eyes and calls upon him to *save* her. She was relapsing into her swoon, and he cries out eagerly to rouse her to consciousness. "Her name, however, (says the writer,) did not come to his recollection, nor any name but this,—'Miss Milner—dear Miss Milner!"

His effort did not succeed—he commanded his steward, Giffard, to tear away her hand, which convulsively grasped his coat, and seeing himself at length free, hastily went away. Sandford entertained hopes that the feelings thus excited would triumph in the father's breast: he was mistaken; she and her companion are ordered to quit the Castle. They take up their residence at a farm-house, in submission to the decree of this despot, and Sandford yet entertains hope.

But Providence has secured a way to his purposes, and defeats the savage arrogance that would be superior to *humanity*. The heir male of Lord Elm-

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wood, Rushbrook, has conceived the most ardent passion for the Lady Matilda, his cousin; and sees himself equally destroyed with his uncle, by its avowal or denial. In the mean time, one of those depraved boobies, devoted to the pleasures of the chace, and any other game that the country affords, who scatter their vices in the abodes of innocence, and conceive a title and an estate to be warrant enough for any wickedness, having fancied the lovely girl thus driven within his reach, determines to bear her off, and treat her as he pleases when she shall be in his power. Certain dissolute companions of this Lord Margrave, by a stratagem, get her into their hands, and bear her off from the humble guardians about her. They are seen and followed by a very steady man, a tenant of Lord Elmwood's, who, past the fear of consequences, hastens back into the presence of her father, and informs him that his *child* has been carried off by Lord Margrave. Lord Elmwood heard the latter part of the fellow's explanation with a seeming composure, and then turning hastily to Rushbrook, said,—

"'Where are my pistols, Harry?' Sandford started from his seat, seized his hand, and cried out to his patron, 'Will you then prove yourself a father?' Lord Elmwood only answered, 'yes!' and left the room."

Cold, sullen, and dark, like a flint, this man was sure to lacerate every thing that tried his

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edge, and never emit one kindly spark unless *violently* struck.

He recovers his daughter from the spoiler, and his own heart from the wretched purgatory he had wound about it. Rushbrook's destiny is placed in the hands of Lady Matilda, and the reader is left to imagine a happiness that is to suffer no blight, attendant upon minds well disciplined by past misfortunes.

We confess we were really astonished when we read the premonition on our return to the characters in the second part of the novel. "The beautiful, the beloved Miss Milner, is no longer beautiful, no longer beloved, no longer——tremble while you read it! no longer *virtuous!*" Nor does the moral of the magician, in the last page of her work, tend in the slightest degree to reconcile us to such a change. "Mr. Milner had better have given his *fortune* to a distant branch of his family, so that he had given to his daughter *a proper education.*" This then is the great panacea, that is to remove all the temptations of youth, and beauty, and passion, and govern and guide the fair vessel with safety on its voyage, through a stormy ocean to a deceitful coast. *How* did it succeed with *Dorriforth?* under the tuition of the ablest of all disciplinarians, a member of the idly censured college of Jesuits—men who, in the new world

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followed the ravaging steps of Cortes and Pizarro, and healed the wounds, nay, almost obliterated the scars, of their insolent domination. "You may remember," says Lord Elmwood to the venerable Sandford, "how troublesome it was to conquer my stubborn disposition in my *youth*; then indeed you *did*, but in my more advanced age, you would find the task too difficult." What *finished* seminaries have ever secured the virtue of the fashionable world? Would the establishments of any of Mrs. Inchbald's rivals in romance have guaranteed the lively and generous disposition of Miss Milner from the effects of besetting circumstance and betraying self-love? No: there is no safety, but in the *moral approbation* of the society in which we live: let it never *truckle* to vice, and the countenance it denies to all impurity shall be the Ægis of Minerva, to preserve virtue immaculate.

We conceive, however, Mrs. Inchbald here to be following *another* precedent. In a fragment, which in our youth almost broke our hearts, Rousseau, we remember, chose to exhibit his Sophia as *avilie*; and Emilius passes a night of breathless agony at the door of her apartment, conscious of her degradation. We have never had nerve enough to inquire for it since; but as Mrs. Inchbald studied, and began a translation of a later work, his '*Confessions*,' in 1790, it is more than pro-

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bable the fragment alluded to decided her sequel to the '*Simple Story.*'

To throw her work so much into *dialogue*, as she has done, was, we should imagine, not so much the result of critical judgment as of professional bias; she was an actress, and her mind was stored with conversational oppositions of sentiment, and sallies of humour or character. We do not mean that judgment did not approve her course, suggested as it was by habit. Some great masters of romance have been led to prefer the dialogue form, as giving a smarter and more vivid glow to the business of their narrative; among whom, Richardson is unquestionably the most excellent. As his works are in the epistolary form, he has only to make his correspondents proud of the praise given to their fidelity of detail, and take care (no difficult matter) that the dialogue is at least as intelligent and interesting as the language of the modern stage. The characters in Richardson do the whole, either as speakers or reporters, and the author never in person appears to address the reader, though he is the father of all the minds which he brings into action. Mrs. Inchbald's plan allows her occasionally, as the author, "to point her moral and adorn her tale;"

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and she avails herself with great skill of the combined advantages.

In the above observations, we have rather inclined to give the impression of a recent perusal upon our own minds, than the opinions of critics who wrote when the work first appeared. In those days, novels came into the short articles of the two great reviews, 'the Monthly and the Critical;' and the reading public was contented with less copious extracts, than it has now become the practice to make in even the Weekly Journals. But she had excited so much notice on the stage, as a respectable woman and a powerful dramatist, and had attracted so wide a circle of intelligent and zealous friends, that the '*Simple* Story' made its way to every heart, and the author was ascertained to be one of the greatest ornaments of her sex.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Publishes her novel—A second edition ordered—Fortune indeed smiles—All her Lottery-tickets Prizes—Increases her weekly income—Dr. Warren and his windows—The late Judge Hardinge—Mrs. Dobson—Sir Charles Bunbury admires her work—'Next-door Neighbours' at Colman's—Thought of in her second novel—George Robinson buys her play—Mrs. Wells's irregularities—Pleasant excursions—"Dieu et les Dames"—Goes to reside with a Mr. Shakespear—Fellow-lodger, General Martin—Kitty Fisher—'The Wedding Day'—'Young Men and Old Women'—'The Massacre,' a prose tragedy; some account of it—Declines an offered engagement at Drury-Lane—Her family—The year 1792 passed cheerfully, at times happily.

DURING the year 1791 Mrs. Inchbald continued in her Frith Street lodgings, and was busily engaged in correcting the press of her romance; a business which we apprehend to be much less burthensome at present, than it formerly was, to the author, as the following will prove:—She frequently sat up at this work till three in the morning, through the bitter nights of January. On the 10th of February, Robinson published her work; and on the 1st of March a second edition

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was ordered. While it was printing, for the first fortnight she passed nearly the whole of her time at Mr. Cooper's, the printer, to forward the re-impression; and then to the close, Miss Cooper was nearly as constantly with *her*, till the 6th of April, when it was ready for delivery. Fortune appears to be just now in the gayest humour with all her interests, "and gives her more than she dares ask;" for all her lottery-tickets prove to be prizes. She receives their value, and ventures to add *four shillings* in consequence to her weekly income. In this month she paid the printer, Cooper; but Mr. Robinson insisted upon repaying her. She lent thirty pounds to Mr. Marlow, who did not bring his newly-married wife to call upon her; and upon receiving a bank-note from Mr. Whitfield, she gratefully carried it to Dr. Warren, and pressed upon his acceptance. She was rendered melancholy by her visit. Lest the reader should conceive for a moment that she was *sad* to part with her money on this occasion, we, as faithful historians, are compelled to state that her self-love had been so happy in his skill, that she had transferred no slight portion of it to her able physician. If she hears but his name in company, she is delighted with the word; and she records her practice of continually walking up and down Sackville Street, where he lived, watching whether there were lights in his apartments—following his carriage about town, for the chance

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of seeing him—and other extravagancies; which, as they promote health by brisk circulation, and cost nothing but the *time* of the pursuit, we shall not much censure, even at thirty-eight, whatever the prudes may do: though her stage friend Rosalind would certainly have "bestowed some good counsel," as she seems to have had "the very *quotidian* of love upon her."

Her 'Simple Story' gained for her the admiration and friendship of the late barrister, judge, and Shakspearian, George Hardinge, who corresponded with her in a mingled strain of gallantry and criticism, of which the progress of our narrative will exhibit the most amusing specimens. Mrs. Dobson, the translator of the 'Mémoires pour servir à la Vie de Petrarch,' sent her recent work, 'A View of Human Life, translated from Petrarch, 1791,' with a letter, to Mrs. Inchbald; which she answered immediately, and in a few days called upon that lady, who presented her with an Æolian harp, and commenced an intimacy with her, which produced the most steady friendship of her whole existence—an introduction to Mr. Phillips of Pall-mall, surgeon to the King, his excellent lady, and their beautiful and interesting family. By her letters to this lady, we are able to trace her feelings and opinions through every variation of her subsequent life to its very close, as she seems to have sought upon every occasion the approbation of these her best

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friends, to whom she yields every thing but her *independence.*

But our present subject is Mrs. Dobson, whose husband being a physician of eminence, she had a carriage at her disposal, and it was frequently at Mrs. Inchbald's service; but the elegant Troubadour was somewhat capricious, and perhaps expected for her civilities greater homage than her new friend ever paid to any body. They disputed sometimes over a table of delicacies, and the adorer of Petrarch became cross, and then cool; but the occasional clouds passed away, and the intercourse between the ladies was not interrupted by their rival pretensions to either beauty or wit.

Sir Charles Bunbury, pretty constantly turned from her door, at length was to be received on a certain day in February. He did not keep his appointment, and for several days the fair expectant was very low-spirited: at last, on the 24th of the month, he came, and some very serious explanation took place, which made her extremely melancholy. We may imagine it to have closed every notion of a union between them, to which she would no doubt have joyfully consented. We, after this, hear no more of Sir Charles till the month of September, when she met him by accident in Covent-Garden, and they walked together. In December she saw him at the Phillips's in Pall-mall; after which he called and left her a ticket for the Westminster play,

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thinking the Westminsters no bad supporters of a dramatic author.

We are thus led by the association of ideas to notice her productions for the stage. We find nothing brought upon the boards but 'Next-door Neighbours,' which was acted at Colman's, in the summer season, with great applause. It is a *petite comédie*, rather slight, in three acts, and taken from two French plays, 'Le Dissipateur' and 'L'Indigent,' who are the next-door neighbours to each other. The *interest* seems to have struck the author as capable of far greater expansion, and she accordingly remembered the filial piety and honour of Henry Wilford, ready to accept a prison to release his father, when, in 'Nature and Art,' she sends the Henry of her novel to the coast of Africa, to perish, or redeem his father. The heartless profligacy of Splendorville is remembered also in the Bishop's son, who, as a judge, passes sentence of death on the victim of his early lust; and Eleanor, however slightly, lends some few points of interest to her Rebecca and Agnes. The *turns* of opposition in the *dialogue*, appear reflected, too, in the *conversations* which so abound in the romance; and we could easily show their almost immediate proximity to each other.

Sir George Splendorville appears to have little merited the *favour* which the author has lavished upon him: he has neither honour nor feeling in his

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mind, to atone for thoughtless extravagance. He only hopes he did not *hesitate*, when a gambler like himself borrows money from him. What he bestows upon the wretched, is only meant to destroy their *virtue*. And yet fortune, by the hand of Mrs. Inchbald, bestows upon him the honest steward of Timon; and induces a Lady Caroline Seymour to win all, and more than all, his money, that she may restore it to him with her own wealth and person into the bargain. "Ah! la charmante voleuse!" as Voltaire said for him—"elle m'a bien embelli." But it does not appear by what *pass of practice* decent ladies become such absolute conjurors at cards; and how, when the beggared gamester asks for the slang *cut* of "double or quits," they can be so sure of their hand, always, as to indulge him and triumph.

We remember the performance of the piece. A very lady-like and lovely creature, Mrs. Brooks, was Palmer's Lady Caroline. She wanted nothing but *force* to stand her ground in the profession, and looked perfectly *chaste* on the stage—the rarest accomplishment which it displays: yet this season it was in profusion at the Haymarket; for Mrs. Stephen Kemble was an impersonation of *purity*, and charmed with native innocence and tenderness of soul, which no successor among even the successful charmers yet seems to have rivalled. She acted the virtuous Eleanor, and from poverty is wafted into affluence, merely by

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ascertaining her real birth: a not very rare stage expedient.

Colman paid her immediately for her benefit nights, and her friend Robinson bought her copyright; so that she had money to pay where she owed it, and presents for her poor relations. She was now told that her sister Debby was married, and indeed her card, with her new name, was left at the door; but Mrs. Inchbald, we may be sure for adequate reasons, does not say what it was. Not only her sisters, but one of her aunts, is "neighboured to her bounty."

During the run of her comedy in the summer, she went frequently to the theatre, chiefly sitting in its pleasant green-room; and there she was introduced to Lord Guildford, Lord Barrymore, and presented in their box to Lord and Lady Petre. In the winter theatres she commonly sat in the pit, and in the month of November fell down on the stairs and sprained her wrist: it was only a temporary inconvenience, and not seriously regarded, for the next month she was again in the same place to see their Majesties and the Princes.

Mrs. Wells, poor woman, now began to show symptoms of the greatest irregularity, and Mrs. Inchbald thought she should be obliged to quit Mrs. Grist's house in consequence: her landlady's affairs, too, were in a bad state. However, she staid in Frith Street all the present year. In the month of June she made a country excursion

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with her two friends, Mrs. Whitfield and Mrs. Morgan, and supped and slept at Longford. On the Sunday these wits "*tried*" a Quakers' meeting; with what success is not related. Mr. Follet now joined them, and they went to Slough to dinner: they returned through Eton and Windsor, saw the College, and walked the Terrace with the King and the Princesses. We hope his Majesty *recognized* his favourites. Follet had greatly amused him in pantomime, which we may imagine was the inducement that led him to visit the Terrace on the present occasion. The party slept again at Longford, and the day following returned to town through Osterley Park. The remembrance of this jaunt suggested a second on the 14th of August, to spend the day at Hampton Court. Mr. Morgan attended them on the present occasion, with the *children*, to increase the wonderment which the palace and the gardens, with the labyrinth, are privileged to excite. They added to these the houses of Pope and Walpole—the toys, and something *more* than playthings, of those great men (for wit and genius dignify all); and passing also through Bushy Park, pronounced their day *delightful*.

Her friends Sir Thomas and Lady Gage coming to town in July, she was honoured by a visit from them, and attended her ladyship on the 5th of August over Carlton House and the Opera House. Her friend Dr. Parsons insisted upon

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taking her in his carriage to dine with her new correspondent, George Hardinge; and she came back in high admiration of his talents. She, a few days after, sent him her *picture*. What could *any* sovereign do more?

She now resumed that important portion of her plan of existence, which the printing of her 'Simple Story' had compelled her to drop, and vigorously pursued her studies. That excellent work brought its author very flattering testimonials, from some who read it, and some we may be sure who did *not*—the reader may class the list at his discretion:—Lady St. John, Mrs. Bonnor, Mr. Pratt, Friar Jerningham, Lady Catherine Douglas, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Kemble, &c.

The year 1791 exhibits one of those retrocessions to religious duties so noticeable in this lady: we must remember, too, that her zeal was not the child of adversity—she had succeeded in every thing. Yet she was not exclusively Catholic in her attendances. On the 27th of March she went to Spring-Garden Church, to hear the Bishop of Bangor preach. On the 3rd of April she heard Mr. Hussey preach in York Street. The 28th of the same month has a perhaps still less equivocal notandum—"Began to say my prayers." On the 1st of May, the weather being wet, "said Mass, &c. at home." The four following Sundays she "regularly attended Mass." On the 31st of July she heard Mr. Austen preach, but did not stay

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Mass. On the 7th of August she was at High Mass; and there the list closes. The going and returning on such occasions, produces chivalrous adventures in all ages. *Dieu et les Dames* are the religion of a gentleman. After hearing Mr. Hussey, she had one by her side who wished to see her home. On the 22nd of May, going to Mass, she met the gentleman who took her *handkerchief* last year: he addressed her and walked with her. As it had not, like Othello's, been given to her by an Egyptian, she did not disturb him in his possession of the charm, whatever "magic there might be in the web of it."

As she had now something to leave behind her, in July she looked over her will, and altered it; and early in October, she says, "Sent a duck to my sister, with a letter, and money to Mr. Pardon for my will." By this it would appear that he was a solicitor.

The early part of the year 1792 saw her still residing with Mrs. Grist; but on the 8th of March, that good woman came to tell her that she should be compelled to sell off her furniture the week following; and on the 12th she writes, with the true feeling of the sex, "My beautiful bed is exchanged for a little tent one," and she begins her search after a new lodging. Probably the divinity of the name stopped her opposite the house of Mr. Shakespear in Leicester

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Fields, a few doors on the left hand from Cranbourn Passage; and, on the 28th of April, she hired there an unfurnished apartment on the second floor. She has now furniture to buy, which occupies her frugal researches for a fortnight, and she did not take possession until the 18th of May, and then it was nearly a month before she had hired even a girl to wait upon her. She probably imagined that Mrs. Shakespear would have been glad to render matters easy to the very engaging lady whom she had received into her house. She was not aware that the poet left no lineal descendant. This female disgrace to the name would not let her maid clean the fair author's apartment; and, on another occasion, she writes,—"I was above an hour striking a light; fetched up my own water three pair of stairs, and 'dropped a few tears' into the needless stream, as any other 'wounded *deer*' might do." However, on the 11th of June, her little maid came for the first time, and afterwards daily, to assist in household matters, and wait upon one so willing at all times to aid herself; by degrees every thing wore a face of neatness and comfort, and she became not merely reconciled to her abode, but happy in it. Exactly opposite to her stood the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds. There was an enclosed plantation, with private walks in the centre of the square, which was itself one of the greatest thoroughfares in the metropolis. It

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was an address, too, which looked well upon a card, was in a direct line of call for managers and their messengers; and even booksellers might find *recreation* in being "unfortunately *obliged*" to walk as far as Leicester Square to speak to Mrs. Inchbald about her work. One of the frolics of fortune had sent her into the house, whose grander apartment was inhabited by the well-known General Martin, a man who combined the almost incompatible qualities of gallantry and stinginess, like the Duke of Marlborough. Martin had the reputation of drawing the once-famed "Kitty Fisher" from the paths of virtue, whom Mrs. Cowley introduces in the masquerade of her 'Belles Stratagem.' Mrs. Inchbald was not at all averse to the exchange of *stair* civilities with the old beau; and he observed, so as that she might hear of it, that "he thought her *pretty*." With such a master-key to the door of communication he politely sent her his newspaper for her amusement; and they afterwards, in a change of residence, found themselves under the same roof.

She had begun last year a farce for Mrs. Jordan, which we now know to have been 'The Wedding Day,' with which that fascinating actress was greatly pleased. The result was the appearance of her friend Kemble as ambassador from Sheridan, to offer her own terms for the production. She mentioned £200. and the bargain was closed at once: she knew she could depend upon a

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faithful remembrancer in John Philip, if Richard Brinsley should forget to imitate the punctuality of Colman and Harris. She had another farce for the Summer Theatre, which was accepted and brought out on the 30th of June; it was called 'Young Men and Old Women,' and taken from 'Le Méchant,' of Gresset. In this drama she introduced a new character, a Mrs. Ambilogy, who, having once been detected in a falsehood, is never afterwards believed on the most trifling occasion. A *new* character indeed, but certainly out of nature. This is not a world of such prevailing truth as to venture upon a punishment so severely precise. The audience *hissed* it very generally at first; they quietly sat it five nights more; but the author took her bookseller with her on the first night, and Robinson, to follow her own lead, "having once *detected*," &c. would have nothing more to say to so ambiguous a venture.

We cannot conceal that the younger Colman, no slight critic, thought well of Mrs. Ambilogy, and thus expressed his approbation:

"St. Alban's Street, Feb. 7, 1792.

"DEAR MADAM,

"You have often made people *laugh till they cry*, but your farce (which I have just perused) has made me quite *melancholy*: for, while you trifle so pleasantly in two acts, I feel it a serious loss of three that you don't afford me *five*. If you will oblige me with a call in St. Alban's

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Street at twelve next Friday morning, we will speak more particularly on the subject. I confess myself a woful delinquent as far as relates to the tragedy; but I will now attend to it very speedily. "I am, Madam,

"Your humble servant,

"G. COLMAN, Jun."

In the month of May he readily undertook to supply her with a prologue. The tragedy which she had requested he would read was one called 'The Massacre.' She had sent it to Harris also, but the stage declined so disagreeable a subject; and she resolved upon printing it with the name of the Robinson house, and the date 1792. Thus driven from the only profitable market, (for an unacted tragedy is never bought,) she avails herself of Horace Walpole's *postscript* to his 'Mysterious Mother,' for her piece has no connexion whatever with the play, (one of the most genuine offspring of the tragic muse,) "never flattered herself that it would be proper to appear on the stage;" and merely adds, that "the story is founded upon circumstances which have been related as *facts*, and which the unhappy state of a neighbouring nation does but too powerfully give reason to credit."

We have read this tragedy, and entirely concur with her friendly critics, that her fame would not have been advanced by either the performance, or

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the publication of it. Such was the opinion, delivered by Mr. Godwin and Mr. Holcroft, which self-love or party hatred might insinuate was natural to men who dreaded the exposure of republican horrors. Hardinge, her new friend, however, gave the same advice; and she at length yielded,—called in her advertisements, and Woodfall and John Robinson resolved to suppress it altogether. It was taken from the French, and in three acts.

One taste of the horrors described by Eusèbe Tricastin we cannot withhold: "I saw infants, encouraged by the fury of their tutors, stab other infants sleeping in their cradles." France had exhibited this extravagant wickedness before, at the infamous St. Bartholomew, "Des enfans de dix ans tuèrent des enfans au maillot." —'L'Esprit de la Ligue.' The piece closes *en spectacle;* Eusèbe has made his escape from Paris only at last to see a bier brought in, on which his wife lies dead, and her two murdered children beside her. After a few sentences of Christian morality, the bier is carried off in slow procession, the attendants singing a dirge, the father and husband following as mourners.

The lovers of *Order* will here be tempted to exclaim with Othello, "Are there no stones in Heaven but what serve for the thunder?" Let them however be told, that the frenzy of popular delusion gives some *colour*, though no adequate sanc-

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tion to such acts; but that, at their worst, they do not exceed the horrors of authorized and deliberate war, commenced upon idle and often capricious grounds, and continued with a dry calculating malevolence—obstinacy flattered into the fame of magnanimous perseverance.

But Mrs. Inchbald's chief employment this year was the serious labour of a five-act comedy, which she named 'Every One has his Fault.' This piece was accepted at once by Mr. Harris, and contains that masterly and original character Mr. *Harmony*, the breather of peace among the children of discord.

Early in the present year, 1792, she was pressed by Mr. Kemble, and by Mr. and Mrs. Twiss, to accept an engagement as an actress at Drury-Lane theatre. Undoubtedly great advantages were held out to her; but we have not the slightest doubt whatever that *there* her talent as an author would have been smothered. At the almost command of Mrs. Jordan, the great managers had bought a farce from her; but we are not to forget that, from the year 1783, the combined admiration of her old friends, Siddons and Kemble, had produced no call upon "their *Muse*" to write for Drury-Lane. The truth was, that Sheridan really did not wish for any striking talent there to dispute his sovereignty; and, as to his deputy, Mr. Kemble, *he* never scrupled to declare his opinion that we had *plays* enough, and far

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beyond all modern competition; that these, carefully revised and well acted, with good farces and melo-drames, with the aid of opera, now in the hands of Storace, and Cobb, and Hoare, constituted the proper attractions of a rational theatre: besides, we naturally prefer a plan in which we are the leading instruments *ourselves*. We willingly suppose that Kemble would not have insulted her with Harris's thirty shillings or two pounds per week, nor have required the author of the 'Simple Story' to walk in a Christmas pantomime. He would have probably given her six pounds per week; but then he would not have expected that she should write for the *other* house, however she might be paralysed in *his*. These, and many other reasons more obvious, no doubt influenced the friends whom she consulted, when they advised her to *decline* the offer. They were people of discernment—Robinson, Woodfall, and the Whitfields.

The present year, therefore, cannot be imagined very productive; yet Colman allowed her a benefit for her farce 'Young Men and Old Women,' and she chose his 'Inkle and Yarico.' As soon as she received her money, she sent her usual presents to her sister Mrs. Pardon, Mrs. Hunt, and Dolly. She now allowed herself but twenty-five shillings a week for her *ménage*, out of which she gives £2. 8*s*. in Christmas-boxes, and absolutely saves £6. 16*s*. in the course of the year.

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On the score of her admirers we find Sir Charles Bunbury now usually admitted when he calls, probably from their joint intimacy with Mrs. Phillips, lest it should seem rudeness to repel him. Dr. Warren was as highly in favour as ever, and the very stones of Sackville Street might cry out upon the repeated efforts of his fair patient to catch a *glimpse* of him. One morning she was told, before breakfast, that a print of the doctor was to be seen in a shop-window; she immediately went to look at it; a few days afterwards she bought it, and was charmed with it; the next day writes—"Read, worked, and looked at my print;" and yet we should suspect it was her*self* that she really loved.

As to her family, her brother Simpson was in town a great part of the year at the Staple-Inn coffee-house; his wife sometimes with him. The intercourse was almost daily while they staid. Her sister Dolly at length obtained a situation as companion to a Miss Pearce in Shoe Lane, and came to town accordingly in May. Mrs. Inchbald immediately called upon the lady, and invited and entertained them in Leicester Square. Not so her sister Debby; she having one day called upon Mrs. Inchbald in a coach, that lady went herself to the door and *denied* her. Mrs. Wells too was once admitted for a moment, and after denied. Her friend Babb entertained her whenever she chose on the Sundays; and, on the

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5th of December, he invited her to meet the Westminster Boys engaged in their Christmas play: the young scholars, we may be sure, were highly pleased with her dramatic countenance, which Terence himself would have equally valued. Her legal friend Hardinge's house, near Kew, afforded some pleasant days; so did Mr. Woodfall's. She obtained an engagement at Covent-Garden theatre for Miss Grist, and zealously attended her performances. Poor Davis, "the first *dresser* in the world," as the theatrical empresses thought him, was now quite discarded, and Miss Hemet besought Mrs. Inchbald to lend him ten pounds, which we should think her unable to refuse.

Her miscellaneous reading this year does not seem to have been of very great importance. A novel of Holcroft's, Mrs. Radcliffe's 'Romance of the Forest,' 'Lord Chatham's Life,' and 'Mrs. Billington's Memoirs.' In her religious studies we find her more than usually earnest. She regularly attends Mass, unless prevented by the weather; and once we find her record, that she prayed and made an examination of her *conscience*. The best close that can be put to the year 1792 is that of her own estimate, that she was, during it, "cheerful, content, and sometimes rather happy."

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CHAPTER XIV.

Splendid success of 'Every One has his Fault'—Buys Five per cent. stock—Politically attacked by the 'True Briton'—Her defence in a letter to Woodfall—Impostors at her door—Holcroft's passion for her—Her regulations for Brandenburg House—Attempts to extort money from her—Describes her feelings as to Dr. Warren—Taylor, the oculist, removes something from her eye—Horror at the regicides of France—Finishes 'Nature and Art' and copies it for the press—Mr. Hardinge's letters; those from his lady also—Copious illustrations of them.

She commenced this year, 1793, with the very necessary attendance at the rehearsals of her five-act comedy, 'Every One has his Fault.' On the 29th of January it was acted for the first time with the greatest applause. She had the usual three benefit nights; and, her piece threatening to go beyond the twentieth repetition, she asserted her claim to a fourth. On this occasion she received a *severe* letter from Harris, but it inclosed a present, (probably a one-hundred-pound note,) as she states its proceeds at seven hundred pounds, and purchases immediately six hundred and fifty pounds | Five per cent. stock, at 107½, £698. 15*s*.

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She had blunted the edge of Harris's reproof, by the happy admission in the title of her play—'*Every* one has his fault.'

Of the comedy itself, it is unnecessary to speak at large, since every body has seen it, or read it. Both the play and the author were attended to assiduously: successful as it was, some of her friends added the weight of *presents* to their compliments. Among whom we find (let avarice not believe it!) General Martin himself. Mrs. Inchbald, alarmed lest the greatest misfortune should follow an act so unusual, returned the General's present. Mr. Robinson bought her copy-right, and the play was published in February: the sale was immense, for the 'True Briton' had been idle enough to make a political attack upon the doctrines it espoused, as tending to disorganisation. This journal was established for the avowed object of supporting Mr. Pitt in his endeavours to suppress the revolutionary spirit, then systematically exerting itself against the governments of all countries. They heard therefore with alarm anything like *liberal* opinions delivered with an emphasis upon the public stage, and caught up enthusiastically by the people, as sanctioning inferences that went still farther. The writers in that journal seem to have been precipitate, and were not borne out by the fact.

Mrs. Inchbald skilfully availed herself of their misconception, and the following letter was ad-

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dressed by her to her friend Woodfall, and published in his paper called 'The Diary.'

"SIR,

"After the most laborious efforts to produce a dramatic work deserving the approbation of the town; after experiencing the most painful anxiety till that approbation was secured; a malicious falsehood, aimed to destroy every advantage arising from my industry, has been circulated in a print called 'The True Briton;' in which I am accused of conveying seditious sentiments to the public. This charge I considered of little importance, while an impartial audience were, every evening, to judge of its truth:—but my accuser having, in this day's paper, taken a different mode of persecution, saying I have expunged those sentences which were of dangerous tendency, the play can, now, no longer be its own evidence: I am, therefore, compelled to declare, in contradiction to this assertion, that not one line, or one *word*, has been altered or omitted since the first night of representation. As a further proof of the injustice with which I have been treated, had I been so unfortunate in my principles, or blind to my own interest, as to have written anything of the nature of which I am accused, I most certainly should not have presented it for reception to the manager of Covent-Garden theatre.

"E. INCHBALD."

"Leicester Square, Feb. 1st, 1793."

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Whatever was attempted to injure her, she succeeded to her most sanguine expectation, and was assailed in consequence from all quarters for gifts and loans, far beyond the usual limits. One day, as she relates, a *grand* beggar called with a footman, who said she was daughter to the late Earl of Harrington: probably a lady's maid and footman of the family; about which they could therefore talk correctly, and not be *detected* impostors. Her nephew, George Huggins, wanted to borrow four hundred pounds. Begging letters arrived from several of her connexions, and Mrs. Wells wrote in the same strain to her from *prison*. A little before this she had hundred-pound notes to leave with her friend, and money to extricate her landlady; there was a sum of four thousand pounds, too, mentioned as a settlement upon her; we suppose by Topham.

Our heroine now seems to have excited a very fierce flame indeed in the bosom of her friend Holcroft; and in June and July he was almost a daily visitor. On the 13th of August, she records that he called, and staid some time; brought her "Verses upon his passion," and, as she says, "wrongfully reproached her for her behaviour." After this appearance as the "Lover with a woful ballad made to his mistress' eye-brow," he came less frequently to see her. This occurred in the fiftieth year of Mr. Holcroft's age, and the fortieth of Mrs. Inchbald's.

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She now in truth seems to be the "general favorite," as she unquestionably was the "general friend." Among her visitors we find the Craven family: and on the 20th of March she writes, "Sat up very late translating regulations for the Margrave of Anspach's servants:" and as a proof of intimacy we find, on the 15th of June, "Thought of dining at Brandenburg House to-morrow, but put it off, on being invited to Mr. Babb's."

"Annoyances seldom," says one of our poets, "come as single spies, but in battalions." However propitious 1793 might be to herself, to her friends and near connexions, it was to be marked with any thing but a *white* stone. Her brother, George Simpson, was arrested, and detained some time in prison. Mrs. Wells, in May, had found her alternative, a *madhouse*. The stepson, George Inchbald, now kept no terms with her, and, in his rage to extort money, accused her of some improper conduct with Mr. Frank Hunt; and threatened to publish a pamphlet about her treatment of him. In July her friend Mrs. Whitfield's eldest daughter ran off with a Captain Dalton; but returned to her family, and, accepting a theatrical engagement with Mr. Powell, sailed in September for America. Her sister Dolly, too, quitted Miss Pearce in Shoe-Lane; so there was a new situation to seek for her. In the same month, Mrs. Grist, her former landlady, came to her in great agony to tell the news of *her* daughter's elopement; on the

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26th of December she wrote an advertisement for the poor mother, containing the usual invitation "to return and be forgiven;" but she heard one evening from her "that she had given up all hopes of recovering her child."

Mrs. Inchbald very fairly writes down her weakness as to Dr. Warren; when she is so happy as to meet him,—"she is afraid to look at him;" sometimes absolutely *avoids* him, though she has been waiting long for his arrival. In May the doctor himself was extremely ill, and she made her inquiries almost daily, till he was convalescent. In July feeling herself low-spirited and subject to faintness, after much consideration, she went to the doctor, who prescribed for her; but, notwithstanding, the autumn did not find her much improved. On the 7th of November, her friendly oculist, John Taylor, called, and took something from her *eye*. He had the tenderest regard for her, and they corresponded during a series of years. Taylor with great sincerity told her to beware of her politics, as their apparent leaning might injure her fortune. She does not mention *what* Mr. Taylor removed from her eye, but it clearly was not the sect of philosophers. Holcroft soon returned to his allegiance. However the new doctrines might attract her, she has expressed with suitable horror her utter detestation of the *murderers* of the King and Queen of France.

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The year 1794 is to be distinguished by the completion of her second romance, which she called 'Nature and Art.' In the month of January she began to copy her work out for the press. It was no trifling matter for the author of 'The Simple Story' to submit a second work of fiction to a public which had so greatly admired her first. Opinion we think is uniform in placing it greatly below her 'Simple Story.' It is in fact the paradox of Rousseau's philosophy, dressed in the pointed smartness of Voltaire; and its object to place the child of cultivation morally *below* the offspring of untutored nature. But this is an obvious fallacy, because it attributes to second causes what really belong to first, and supposes artificial life to be in fault, instead of the inherent bent of the individual. The goodness may be found in higher life, and the vice still more deformed in the lower stages of existence. A great, indeed indisputable, authority has said,—"Nature seems to have prescribed to every man, at his birth, the bounds both of his virtues and his vices." She submitted her work to her three literary friends, Mr. Holcroft, Mr. Godwin, and Mr. Hardinge; the latter of whom, she says, "did not like it." This seems to have been a hasty inference, as the reader will soon see from his letters, which we shall now, though they are none of them dated, take an opportunity to insert. As we have had occasion before to remark, they are a

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mixture of criticism and gallantry, such as we might have fancied palatable; but he offended the irritable Muse by the freedom of his strictures. He, however, tried to propitiate her by a beautiful present of books. It may be doubted whether he entirely succeeded.

GEORGE HARDINGE, ESQ. TO MRS. INCHBALD.

"MADAM,

"I have often heard the Siddons's, and Mr. Kemble, and both Twiss's declare—but I would not believe it—that you were not only capricious, but ill-bred enough to look your friends in the face as if you never had seen them. I saw this, which I thought a calumny, demonstrated Monday last. It was near two o'clock, and in St. James's Park. You had on your black muslin, had a little umbrella in your hand, and a little dumpy woman in white as a foil. I passed as close to you as I am now to my pen, and you would not appear to know me.

"I told my wife, and she said it was no surprise to her, as you had not answered her letter."

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"MY DEAR, DEAR CREATURE,

"Your own words—your own hand—and the superscription to *me*. Oh how flattering!

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I thought Sir Charles[1] looked yellow in the House of Commons last night; and when I arrived at home, I saw the reason for it in your *billet-doux* to me. The fairies told him that he was less beloved than me; and though I saw him fast asleep, I could easily discover that his dreams were feverish.

"But alas! your affection to Warren[2] makes you entirely overlook the invalid who suffered by it, and whom you don't even mention once. I have really no other intelligence of him than that my poor suffering angel was told he was ill, and that messages were not then (Saturday) permitted by Mrs. Warren to be delivered to her husband; except that Lord Bayham told me it was a complaint in his bowels and of no alarming nature: but for your sake, my dear, dear creature, I have sent a message to Mrs. Warren, and you shall learn the answer.

"Do you really mean that you thought Bromley's a dull or an absurd thing, or both?—Your marginal notes diverted me extremely.

"ADIEU!"

[1] Sir Charles Bunbury, of whose admirable siege the reader has had so many bulletins.

[2] As Dr. Warren was a married man, there is somewhat offensive in this idle chase of his very shadow; and Hardinge should have laughed the Muse out of her folly. However, a *bachelor* physician was on the point of making his appearance, and hopes could be entertained that were neither unreasonable nor irregular. This very year introduced Dr. Gisborne to her acquaintance.

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"DEAR MUSE,

"I am just come from Lord Camden's, where I learn that poor Warren is entirely out of danger, and will be in his chariot again very soon —in two or three days. This too comes immediately *from himself* in a message to Lord Camden.

"For this I expect a kiss in your answer; at least by the bearer; and a good breakfast at nine, ten, or eleven, to-morrow morning, whichever of these hours you should prefer; though I should like the earliest of them: but I am,

"Dear Muse,

"Your ever affectionate though hated servant,

"G. H.

"If you don't think I deserve the expense, I'll bring a roll with me in my pocket.[1]

"I shall exult,[2] my dear friend, in your work,

[1] A playful allusion to her systematic frugality.

[2] By the present letter it appears that she had also submitted to his perusal in MS. the memoirs of herself, to which we have before alluded. She had in that work used the colloquial vulgarism, "my sister Deborah is prettier than *me*." (A fact which might produce that estrangement from her sister's intimacy, so obvious in Mrs. Inchbald's diary.)

Hardinge, as a scholar, should have disdained to talk of determining such points as whether an *oblique* or a *nominative* case should be used, by a man's ear or good company. "I am prettier than *she*," he says, "would shock every ear, and every optic nerve." The *shock* is one from ignorant custom. The grammatical rule is perfectly simple, and a safe invariable guide. Take it therefore, ladies, from Dr. Lowth:

"When the qualities of different things are compared, the latter

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if I may only dictate every word of the few changes which I have made in the few passages which I copied.

" Scripture makes 'prettier than *I*' canonical, and Lowth commends it as the best grammar. But a man's ear, and good company, determine all such points.

" 'I am prettier than *she*' would shock every ear and every optic nerve.

" 'I am prettier than *he*' would less offend, yet both must be right if one of them is.

" I am convinced that both of them are—in the usage of good writing—viciously inelegant, though pedantically, it's possible that both of them would be correct: not that I am clear in that point either, but shaken I confess by such a man as Lowth.

'You are a much *greater loser* THAN ME.'
SWIFT to POPE, Let. 63.

noun or pronoun is not governed by the conjunction *than*, or *as*, (for a conjunction has no government of cases), but agrees with the verb, or the preposition, expressed, or understood. As 'thou art wiser than *I* [am];' 'you are not so tall as I [am],' &c." So, Mrs. Inchbald should have written " prettier than *I*" (not *me*,) for the verb being supplied makes the comparison " prettier than I am."

In this age of reprints, we refer to the Bishop's best edition, 1782, at page 182:—We have even yet nothing superior to this Introduction. But Lowth would have materially varied in many parts of his little volume, had he known or suspected the great discovery of Horne Tooke, which showed him the *manner*, of significations expressed by what are called particles in language.

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'And though, by Heaven's severe decree,
She suffers hourly more THAN ME.'—SWIFT to STELLA.

'King Charles, and *more* THAN HIM, the Duke, &c.'
BOLINGBROKE on *Parties*, Let. 3.

'We contributed a third more than the Dutch,
Who were obliged to the same *more* THAN US.'
SWIFT'S *Conduct of the Allies.*

'A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty, but a fool's wrath is heavier *than* THEM *both*.'—PROV. xxvii. 3.

Then finish, dear Inchbald, this critical war,
And let us, like Horace and Lydia, agree;
For *thou* art a *Muse* as much brighter *than her*,
As he was a Poet sublimer *than me*.

'Beelzebub, *than* WHOM, Satan except, &c.'—MILTON.

'Phalaris, who was so much *older* THAN HER.'
BENTLEY'S *Diss. on Phalaris.*

'My sister Deborah is prettier *than* ME.'
MRS. INCHBALD'S *Life of Herself.*"

"DEAR, DEAR MUSE,

"I cannot resist the joy it gives me to acquaint you, that I read aloud to my wife and another lady, this evening, the first volume of your sweet novel. They were enchanted with it: and—I will do justice against myself, they were not offended by the *wig*,[1] the *uplifted hand*,[2] the

[1] A shrewd but inexperienced child observing a wig, to be so constant a part of a Dean's personal appearance, is represented as seeing it lie upon a table and *bowing* to it respectfully.

[2] Brother William having *no ear* for Henry's masterly performance on the violin, takes Henry to hear him preach, and asking afterwards, "how he liked his sermon?" is (perhaps not "modestly," but justly) answered, "You know, brother, I have no ear."

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cut upon William in the pulpit,[1] and three or four passages against which I had protested. I begin therefore to believe, as well as to hope, that I was wrong. The eloquence, the simplicity, the wit, the sense, and the pathetic morality, enhanced them. I never gave more delight than in reading you, and I thank you for giving me so much consequence.

"Forgive me for intruding upon you with such a vent of my new delight; and—Farewell!"

"MY DEAR MUSE,

"You will make me happy in accepting Voltaire's Dramatic Works,[2] for my sake and for

[1] If this alludes to the action of the poor culprit, when she hears sentence of death pronounced by the judge against her, and that judge the very man who in his youth seduced her, it is difficult indeed to imagine any ground of exception that did not arise out of Mr. Hardinge's profession (to which indeed the *wig* may also be referred). But we must submit the passage to the reader:

"When William placed the fatal velvet on his head, and rose to pronounce her sentence, she started with a kind of convulsive motion; retreated a step or two back, and *lifting up her hand*, with a scream exclaimed—'Oh! not from *you!*'"

To conceive the *situation* (certainly far from improbable) is a striking proof of imagination. To write the exclamation itself, is a sublime instance of the intense *feeling*, which genius can call up, to animate even fancied occurrences.

Mr. Hardinge's triumph as a reader, must be shared between the lady hearers and the authoress. Mrs. Hardinge is one of *nature's* counsel, learned in the laws of her divine code; and we admire her on every account. As to criticism, Sir Fretful Plagiary has long established his opinion of the sex: "Upon my soul, the women are the best judges, after all!"

[2] To which, consulting equally the prejudices of both nations,

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your own amusement. I intended yesterday to have presented them upon my knees, but was detained in the House of Commons.

"My wife is glad that you have made it up with me, but upon selfish principles; for if your anger and resentment had persevered, she could not have benefited by your good-will to her.

"I am, with obstinate affection,

"Your admirer, friend, and servant,

"G. HARDINGE."

"MY DEAR MUSE,

"I hope you will resume your pen, and I rejoice that you are better.

"There are two accounts of Lord C..... and V..... One is, that at nineteen, and a peer of the realm, as well as lieutenant, he was put up with his naked back upon what is called the yard-arm of the ship, and that he received twelve lashes—a disgrace equal to three hundred in the military, and in a ship for an officer of his rank unexampled. It is admitted in this account, that his behaviour had partly merited punishment even heavier, but of a different kind; and it is contended, that he should have been put in irons till he could have been tried by a court. It is insinuated, that he excited the ship's company to rebellion against the captain.

we say most sincerely, that neither France nor England have yet seen successors of equal power.

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"On the other hand, what seems the most prominent feature in V . . . .'s favour is, that he has made his appeal to any officer of rank and of honour in the naval service, (at least as the papers tell us;) and another story is with equal industry circulated—It is insisted, that he is a man of undoubted bravery, though of stern manners; and that he would not therefore pass for a coward, in refusing the challenge, unless he felt the superior courage of risking that odium, in honour to the service, and for the support of its discipline, by exempting officers in command from *personal* responsibility for a punishment of their inferiors and subordinates. It is added that, whatever the punishment was, (for even the fact of the whipping does not seem thoroughly ascertained,) every officer on board approved it. It is even insinuated, that it was an offence which demanded, as well as admitted and justified, the *very* punishment it received. I am not a master of any thing like the materials for judgment. I have not seen my constituent, and have no guess at his present character; but when I can pick up any thing, you shall know.

"My wife and myself are happily re-united; she is goodness itself to me: I love her dearly, and wish to see you at the Castle again.

"Ever dearly yours, and most gratefully,

"G. HARDINGE."

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The two following are from the lady whose taste we have already had occasion to admire. She seems indeed formed to be the gentle grace of society. Nothing can be more truly feminine and prepossessing, than these unstudied effusions of her friendly mind.

MRS. LUCY HARDINGE TO MRS. INCHBALD.

"My dear Madam,

"I have been extremely concerned twice to miss the pleasure of seeing you, from being out when you were so good as to call upon me. But the fact is, my friends leave me so little to myself here, that it is very difficult to *catch* me, except by engagement, when I am well. I wish therefore that I could *seduce you* into conquering *that bad habit* of *laying yourself up in cotton* after sunset in the winter—if *winter* this season can be called; but according to my opinion it has been put off till next year. I am not without hope of being able to persuade you to pick the *merry-thought* of a chicken with me, and the sooner the better after Tuesday next; and if I could induce you to make the hour for your departure something less *antediluvian*, it would be a great improvement and addition to my gratification. Do not be *cruel*, and refuse my invitation; for indeed, my dear Madam, it would make me very happy to see you, being, with great regard, your faithful friend,

"Lucy Hardinge."

"70, Sloane Street."

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"Twickenham, Jan. 19.

"I have been anxious to give you my best thanks for your kind and flattering letter sooner, my dear Madam, but various unpleasant circumstances have prevented me from putting my wishes into execution. In the first place, my time and thoughts have been chiefly engaged by my sweet young friend, whom you have heard me mention as dying of a consumption. Her decline is the most lingering and shocking, possible! She is become a mere skeleton! her shoulders, hips, and back, are plastered. For the last fortnight, she has not been able to leave her bed; yet she exists, and God only knows how long she may continue in this miserable state. She has been supposed actually dying, not less than a dozen times, I verily believe; and it is not in my power to express the sufferings of her family. They cannot help raising their hopes when she rallies thus wonderfully, (though my opinion never changes,) and they are in despair when she is worse again. In short, I have gone through such scenes of wretchedness with them, as I hope never to witness more. I am the only friend they see at present; and as I have the satisfaction of knowing that I am of use in this house of mourning, I will not desert it to save my own feelings, though they are indeed tried most painfully! and I feel my health is often affected by the agitation of my mind. I brought a bilious complaint home

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with me, and it has been so troublesome for many days, that I have been obliged to nurse myself when I have not been nursing my dear invalid.

"These have been the reasons which made me silent, though I wished very *particularly* to write to you, because I suspected Mr. H. might make some observations upon your letter; which I could not avoid showing him, as it was directed to him. It is contrary to my inclination to show my friends' letters in general; and for this reason, I universally desire they will *not* write to me *under cover to him;* for he always *makes a point* of *seeing every letter that is enclosed to him,* and is so apt to take offence, (*entre nous,* without a cause,) that I am glad to avoid a *worry* by keeping them to myself: and as he asked to see yours, I thought he would fancy there was some *treason* or *mystery,* if I refused to give it: therefore, (though I knew he would look a little *yellow,* and perhaps *black* upon your observation concerning the *Marquis,*) as I felt perfectly unconscious of any *crime* being designed by either you or me upon this subject, I did not hesitate to obey his commands. The passage to which I allude did not escape his notice, and an observation followed, which I had rather he should have made to me than to you, for it did not *ruffle* me at all. It was *this observation,* however, which made me fear you might be plagued by a letter upon the subject, and I made him promise that he would not tell you he had

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seen your letter; whether he kept the promise, you know better than I do.

"After I wrote from Brandon, I was still nearer your native residence, my dear Madam, for I was at Hawstead, with a very dear and charming friend of mine, Miss Metcalfe; and had the pleasure of joining with her and her sisters in your praise. One of the Miss Metcalfes frequently visits your sister, who is out of health, and is most sincerely anxious to be of service to her. I was very happy to hear the justice they did to your virtues, as well as your talents, and agreed with perfect sincerity in all they said. Talents *alone* would make me ambitious of your *acquaintance;* but your other perfections make me proud of you as a *friend,*—and I trust it will not be my fault if I lose my claim to this distinction from you. I am ashamed to send *you* such an ill-written performance, so full of blunders. But if you knew how much my mind is oppressed, how much reason I have to be ill at ease just now, you would readily make excuses for me.

"Adieu, my dear Madam, I beg you to believe me ever your obliged and affectionate

"L. HARDINGE."

"No more of talk, where [an angelic] guest
With man, as with her friend, familiar used
To sit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repast, permitting him the while
Venial discourse unblamed: I now must change
Those notes for tragic." PARAD. LOST.

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GEORGE HARDINGE, ESQ. TO MRS. INCHBALD.

"Your most absurd letter, just received, shall never appear in judgment against you: not because it is *ill-natured* and *unjust*,—not because it convinces me that your *temper* is *impracticable*, (because these are points that are becoming and rather interesting in a *petticoat*,) but from the delicacy which *I* feel for *you*, and which *you* little *deserve*: in other words, because it is a childish and weak letter. It has the head of bigotry, and the soul of Holcroft. Both of the Hunts would proudly disclaim it: Brother Simpson, at Lord Petre's, would say, 'Thanks to the Holy Virgin that I am not an *original*, as Betty is.' Martin would refuse your little parties with him upon a summer's day, to the King of Bohemia's Head, or the Paddington Bowling-green, if he could see a page of this letter to me. Good bye to the *Bob* Sundays!—and as to G * * *, the little atheist! he'd creep out of the key-hole, or even take his chance out of the window, if he could imagine you so *poor* and so *flimsy* a thing. Sir Charles would lift up his shoulders, and put his hands into his breeches-pockets, with more philosophy than respect or attachment, if I sent a copy to him of your philippics against me.

"As to your *abuse*, you have taught me to value it. Oh that I may for ever be called *stupid* by the person who wrote a *Satire upon the Times*, by setting a ship on fire, and burning every

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soul in the book except a Lord of the Bed-chamber—by whom she meant the K——."

We have but little to say as to this last letter from Mr. Hardinge, and are thankful to him for refusing to our curiosity a sight of that to which it is an answer. The pleasant mention he makes of her relatives and friends, and the effect which he imagines such a letter would have upon them, has whim in the notion, and is not without characteristic touches of the ludicrous. Our pleasant friend, the philosopher, will only smile at the mad-dog howl of *Atheism;* but we will tell him a story to help his digestion, and the occurrence happened to ourselves:

We were one day speaking of Porson to a precisian of the old bench, when he interrupted us by saying, that "he would not *sit down* with such a man." To which we simply replied, "And pray, *why?*" "Why!" he exclaimed; "why he is a *Deist*, or *Atheist*, or something of that *sort*, is he not?" To this absurdity we coolly answered, "Something of that *sort!* Pray, *what* sort?—for you have already classed within it one who *believes* a God, and one who does *not;* as you would know, if you attached any meaning to the words you use." Our friend left us without reply, with a look that showed him to have settled the *sort* of persons with whom he was to number our unfortunate, because not illiberal, selves.

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"The Satire on the Times," which Mr. Hardinge refers to, is to us unintelligible: it must allude to some of those political writings which were of a temporary nature, and have happily perished in the furious season that gave birth to them. We find that she used to receive anonymous letters occasionally, of *caution*, as to such publications; and many personal friends, besides Taylor, ventured to admonish the independent lady. But when Holcroft was committed to prison on a charge of high treason, she neither felt alarm about *herself*, nor would desert her *friend;* but went immediately with Robinson the publisher in a coach to Newgate to visit him: nor should it be forgotten that, a very short time before this happened, she wrote a letter to acquaint him, that, in consequence of the novel which he had just published, she *broke off* all acquaintance with him. Her *temper*, Mr. Hardinge, may be, as you say, impracticable; but surely her soul is generous. How many dastard spirits would have applauded their own prescience for anticipating Holcroft's commitment—rejoiced that they had broken with him so exactly in time —and left him in his gaol, unsoothed by the countenance which he had all but worshipped!

The *Martin* mentioned, is General Martin. The *Bob* Sundays are those she passes either with Mr. Babb or Robinson the bookseller; most probably the latter.

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CHAPTER XV.

Begins a new comedy—Writes on Synonymy—Sheridan pays for 'The Wedding Day' before its performance!—Her sister Debby's decline and death—Comforts administered by Mrs. Inchbald—Pays the funeral expenses—Visits Suffolk—Buys into the Long Annuities—Another physician, Dr. Gisborne—His letters to Mrs. Inchbald, Sir Thomas (then Mr.) Lawrence—Dr. Gisborne—The farewell and return of love—The mighty Magician of Udolpho—In 1795 Mrs. Inchbald dislocates her shoulder—yet begins to write upon the Virtues—and her own Life; identical subjects—Her brother Simpson falls in a duel—Mrs. Whitfield's death, and Mrs. Dobson's—Kemble—The Abercorns at Stanmore—Carlton House—Miss Wallis and the Loughboroughs—Lady Lanesborough denied—Savings of economy.

THE most remarkable events which she records, we shall pass through as rapidly as we can, allowing ourselves to pause only where she herself gives interest to the facts.

On the 5th of May she began a new comedy, of which we shall know more in the sequel; and in May wrote a critique on Synonymy, probably occasioned by Mrs. Piozzi's volumes on the subject. Mrs. Siddons made her a present of her bust by Mrs. Damer. She saw a good deal of the Kemble family this year, including the Twisses;

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and at length Kemble came to explain to her why she had never got her money for the farce she had sold to them. The fact, it seems, was, that Sheridan had *lost* it: so at length she is requested to write another copy, upon the receipt of which Mr. Sheridan transmitted a note which was paid in July; and, a wonder indeed for such management, the author was actually paid before the piece was put into rehearsal!

Her sister Dolly we should conceive to have quitted Miss Pearce, with the view of filling a situation more amusing, to be sure,—that of barmaid at the Staple-Inn Coffee-house; kept, it should seem, by their friend Bob Whitfield: and there Mrs. Inchbald visited her frequently. The other sister, whose *prettier* face does not seem to have contributed to her advancement in life, poor Debby, was now approaching the end of her course, and in the greatest pecuniary distress. This burst through all the reserves of Mrs. Inchbald, and she hurried to support her in the dreadful crisis, which she took every pains to render less bitter. She supplied the required comforts of existence, gave her the attendance of a priest, and at her death took upon herself the whole funeral expenses. The miserable fate of this sister, deeply regretted, pressed long and heavily upon the mind of Mrs. Inchbald. She could not help reproaching herself with cruelty for that severity which had driven her from the door when

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she came a supplicant, perhaps a penitent too. She had, for almost strangers, disdained the world's opinion; and ought she to have done less for her own sister? Perhaps, proud like herself, a different treatment might have rendered her as amiable as the favourite Dolly. She had not, she thought, sufficiently made the experiment; and now all change of system was closed. Her sister Bigsby's husband, too, was in danger of going blind. If her professional triumphs were brilliant, she had frequent occasions for the firmness of her philosophy; or a more tender, as well as purer guide, her religion.

As soon, however, as she had recovered composure, she thought it best to put herself in motion; and accordingly, in the afternoon of the 3rd of August, with her sister Mrs. Hunt, she left town in a stage-coach, and at three o'clock the next day arrived at her brother's house at Bury. On the 5th and 6th she rode about the country and visited her old acquaintances, and received company at dinner. On the 7th she paid a visit to her friend Lady Gage, and staid with her till the 12th, highly gratified by the pleasure she had given and received. On that day she removed to Sir Charles Bunbury's seat, where she remained till on the 16th she passed the day with her sister Bigsby; slept at night at Mr. James Hunt's; the day following, Sunday, went to chapel; took leave of Lady Gage, and other old friends; and

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at six the following morning, with her sister, set out on her return to London. With all her pains, either of the head, or stomach, or side, she seems always insensible of fatigue, either *personal* or *mental;* whatever "thin partitions may divide their boundaries."

The production of her farce of 'The Wedding Day,' at the classical theatre, as all concerned in it called it and thought it, employed her assiduously during its rehearsal. It was acted the first time on the 1st of November, was very loudly applauded, and indeed few pleasanter farces have proceeded from her or any pen. It was extremely well acted, and highly serviceable to the theatre. Kemble wrote to Mrs. Inchbald, advising her to sell the copy-right, and her friend Robinson was ready to purchase. Of her profits she invested £137. 7*s.*; for which, in the Long Annuities, she got £7 per annum. Her broker, Morgan, aided her judiciously, as to changing her securities from time to time, and deriving the largest income that could be had without sacrificing the principal; and she now looked to a five-act comedy as the means of purchasing considerably ere long. Chance again threw something like a matrimonial speculation in her way, in the attentions of a young physician, a Dr. Gisborne; who, as the French used to open their trenches in the days of gal-

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lantry with violins, approached our fair citadel with compliments:—

DR. GISBORNE TO MRS. INCHBALD.

"Clifford Street, July 8th, 1794.

"Dr. Gisborne presents his compliments to Mrs. Inchbald, and would be much obliged to her if she would let him know the *name* of a novel which she wrote, and *where* it is to be *bought:* and, if it were not too troublesome, if she would give him leave to call upon her for five minutes, at any time this morning after twelve o'clock, or at any time to-morrow morning before that hour, to ask a question or two of the like kind, he should be still more obliged to her."

The questions of an admirer after an author's publications, whatever be the writer's sex, are too flattering not to be welcome; and Mrs. Inchbald lent a very gracious ear to her new friend, and sent him, at no great interval, all that he wanted. His acknowledgments are thus expressed:—

DR. GISBORNE TO MRS. INCHBALD.

"Dr. Gisborne presents his compliments to Mrs. Inchbald, and has received the packet; but is sorry to observe a considerable disadvantage which arises to himself on that subject, for she has so executed his commission as that he thinks he shall never trouble her on a similar occasion

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again. In short, she has managed it to be so entirely to his satisfaction, and so exactly what he wished for, as that he fears she must have given herself much trouble about it. There is a disadvantage, also, arising to herself from it, which is, that he must call upon her again (if but for a minute) to thank her, and to reimburse her the expense. He has so many things to do, as is always the case when he is about to leave London, that he confesses himself quite bewildered by the multiplicity of them."

The Doctor took his tea with her, soon two or three times a week, and, not coming quite up to the mark of her expectation, sometimes found the Muse unpropitious. The following note is sufficiently humble:—

"Monday, Oct. 27, 1794.

"A poor, snubbed, frightened creature has a timid intention of venturing to-morrow afternoon into Leicester Square to beg a dish of tea; but hopes, by way of protectress, Mrs. Grist will be there."

What passed on this *fragrant* occasion may be surmised by the letter which follows. He again uses her *fame* as his shield against her displeasure.

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DR. GISBORNE TO MRS. INCHBALD.

" Nov. 3, 1794.

" DEAR MADAM,

" It is hoped that sincere congratulations to you on the success of your piece at the theatre may not, *thus offered*, be unacceptable, notwithstanding you have been pleased to declare that, from the quarter whence they come, if conveyed in any *other* manner, you should think them *troublesome* and *disagreeable*."

To be sure, Doctor; a lady like Mrs. Inchbald cannot afford her evenings to the mere gossiping of even cultivated idleness. She has herself and a great part of her connexions to support by the incessant labour of her mind and hand. If you mean any serious relief to her toils, let her know it, and you may be sure she will neither think you troublesome nor disagreeable. For the *next* therefore:

" Nov. 11, 1794.

" Believe me, dear Madam, that it was with no small concern you were heard to say, the other day, that you were low-spirited. This is a disorder of a dastardly nature, which generally retreats on being opposed. I must therefore beg of you to use all exertions to baffle it; in which, I am persuaded, you will find great assistance in the company and conversation of your relations, and of those with whom you are

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familiar; for too much hurry or solitude are seldom of use. By this note you will assure yourself that you are thought of by your friends when you do *not* see them, and I will assure you that you are thought *well* of by them; and, give me leave to add, that this is no bad reflection for one who endures your complaint: I am therefore in hopes that these lines will be of more use to you than ever so long a prescription. You would have had them a day or two sooner, but that I have been a good deal engaged; and yesterday, for my sins, had the misery to dine with about a hundred apothecaries, and to sit at table by one of the most noisy of them all. Adieu!"

A lover in November, at least in our latitude, must be ardent indeed. The Doctor, during the latter week of that bleak division of the year, never made his appearance, which of course made his fair friend very *uneasy*. But on the 1st of December all her thoughts and hopes were revived by the following:—

DR. GISBORNE TO MRS. INCHBALD.

"December 1st.

"You know, my dear Madam, that my ears are very dull and fallacious, so that I could hardly believe the report they made to me when Mrs. Mattocks *seemed* to say, yesterday at dinner, that Mrs. Inchbald desired her compliments to me; for, when I last had the honour of seeing

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you, you dismissed me with so severe a speech, twice uttered, that, if you heard my reply to it, you must be convinced it was received by me as the words seemed to import you meant it should be received, viz. that you desired I should never call upon you again; which sentiment was so completely confirmed to me by the words of a note I had the honour to receive from you a few days afterward, that I really thought I must first wait till I was absolutely forgotten ere I presumed again to be introduced to you. However, on the encouragement above, I beg your permission to drink a dish of tea with you on Friday, soon after six; but confess that I should be very happy to receive a *line* from you, in the mean time, to let me know what sort of reception I may expect."

Mrs. Inchbald wrote to him the *very* next day; we do not know what the man would have: who, that writes a prescription, expects the patient to be able to translate or swallow it literally? The Doctor very idly did both; for he wrote the following in reply:—

DR. GISBORNE TO MRS. INCHBALD.

"Dec. 3d.

"Your favour of yesterday, dear Madam, I received, and I ought to thank you for it, as it was my request to hear from you. There are indeed some expressions in it which, if I construe rightly, (though perhaps I may be liable to inter-

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pret them in too favorable a sense for myself,) I ought to remember with gratitude.

"It was from an apprehension, arising from observation at different times, that my frequent calls were disgusting to you, as being a hindrance to your rational amusements, that I was quite alive, I confess, to a severe and pointed speech you made me to that purpose: and when I found it not only confirmed under your hand, but carried still further by a declaration that you were happy I could not wait upon you at the time appointed; and also, that you should be still more so on the day when I was to have been with you; I thought I had nothing more to do than to wait patiently, if ever they should arrive, for more favorable dispositions toward me.

"I did not know that there was ingenuity in any part of my note, but believe there is sincerity in yours when you tell me that you have greater regard for those who *relinquish* your acquaintance, than for those who endeavour to preserve it. Such sentiments you must allow to be curious and uncommon; and you see the dilemma into which by them you thrust your friends: for it follows, with regard to myself, that, in order to obtain your esteem to the degree I would wish, it is actually incumbent on me *never to see your face.*

"To consider the cause of this is too bewildering a subject for my head in its present state, and I must therefore quit it."

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Mrs. Inchbald's memorandum relating to this letter is singular, and no bad proof of her skill in such combats.

"Dec. 5th. Received a letter from Dr. Gisborne to *end* our acquaintance. In extreme grief till about seven, when he called most unexpectedly, and reversed all my melancholy ideas."

All now went on smoothly as she fancied. The Doctor's visits were regular and constant; till, on the 17th, she records,—"Dr. Gisborne drank tea here, and staid very late: he talked seriously of *marrying*—but not ME." Imagination only can do justice to the scene, and an accomplished actress alone perform the lady's part in it. To be made a confidante, instead of a sovereign—Mrs. Malaprop, instead of Lydia. To realise the ludicrous of the stage in the apartment of a beautiful woman, a genius, and a wit; one accustomed to the lover's homage, and desiring it too on all occasions! How could a discerning man see any thing in it but insult,—how could a physician have been so utterly insensible to symptoms?

The day following she reviewed the state of her mind on this occurrence, and pronounced herself "happy at Dr. Gisborne's behaviour, notwithstanding what he said." This did not prevent her from "contriving brave punishments" for him; and when, on the 23rd, he came as usual for his tea, before he left her, she peremptorily ordered him "never either to visit, or even

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write to her again." She says, "He received this in a manner that convinced me I was right." And thus, with the year, seemed to close one of the lovely widow's prospects of revisiting the temple of Hymen.

She had this year been frequently in company, and that, as usual, made some valuable additions to her personal friends. One of Mrs. Siddons's routs gave her the pleasure of knowing the late Sir Thomas Lawrence, then beginning his course among us, and pursuing that line of conduct which made him the painter of taste and elegance—the elements of his association as well as of his art.

Nor second to this, in whatever way we look at it, was the invitation to Mr. Robinson's, which introduced her to the mighty magician of Udolpho, the very accomplished Mrs. Radcliffe; and, if *terror* be the grand source of the sublime, the most *fertile* in its employment among the sons and daughters of fiction. She *sported* in it as a congenial element; and, fearless herself, held every imagination, aged or youthful, alike enthralled by her mysteries. She was like the *Danger* of Collins:—

> "Danger, whose limbs of giant mould
> What mortal eye can fix'd behold?
> Who stalks his round, an hideous form,
> Howling amidst the midnight storm;
> Or throws him on the ridgy steep
> Of some loose hanging rock to sleep."—ODE TO FEAR.

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We are to notice, that in the month of March, 1794, Mrs. Inchbald sat for her portrait to Mrs. Douce, of Upper Gower Street. She knew something herself of the art, at least as far as portrait-painting went, and therefore hardly would commit her features to an insufficient pencil; for we are so unfortunate as to have forgotten this lady professor, wide as our acquaintance has been among the artists of the last forty years.

The first act of the new year, 1795, was to remove the wrong impression under which the old year allowed itself to close. Dr. Gisborne, the very day after his interdict, began to correspond with the fair and implacable charmer, who, on her side, began to fear he would take her at her word; but being in haste to get to Cambridge, he carried his letter along with him, and contrived to finish on the 31st what was begun on the 24th. It was therefore, as she admits, with great delight, that on the 2nd of January she received a long letter from him, calculated, most assuredly, to impress her with the notion that she had the power to render him unhappy, and that he could not imagine how he had forfeited her esteem so entirely as he had done.

"December 24.

"My best compliments, dear Madam, wait upon you; and I actually determined, when I sat down, to let you know that I would put off my journey for three or four days, and that I *would*

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not tell you the reason why. But upon consulting my almanack and my second thoughts, I find that St. John's day being on Saturday next, and a grand gala with us, (at which I have promised to be present,) and having yesterday heard some very ill news relative to myself, which it is impossible, from my feelings, to keep a secret, both my projects must prove abortive."

"Dec. 31.—Thus far, my dear Madam, had I written ere I left London. And now you must permit me to acquaint you with what afflicts me so much; and as I know no one who, from good sense and knowledge of the world, is more capable than yourself of giving me advice on so interesting a subject, I must beg that you will permit me to intreat the favour of a few lines in the course of a few days, to instruct me how I shall behave on so trying an occasion.

"You must know, that I have many relations—such as God has been pleased to give me—and a few friends of my own choice. Among the latter I have of late been so strangely treated, that your advice and assistance is absolutely necessary to me. All at once, and without the smallest change of behaviour or diminution of friendship on my part, I am received with the utmost contempt and disregard; nay, I am told to my face that they shall like me better by knowing me less; that they wish never to see me again; that I am be-

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come even loathsome to them: and this indeed is evident even from their behaviour as well as words, &c. &c.

"Now, as nothing but the most superlative and unaccountable caprice on their parts can possibly be assigned by me as the cause of all this, I beg the favour of a few lines, directed to me at St. John's College, Cambridge, with directions how I may regain their esteem; and if you are so good as to let me hear from you in the course of a few days, my gratitude will be for ever bounden to you. The state of my mind and my sleepless eyes are the cause why I cannot possibly bear to write one line more on the subject, excepting that I believe I shall return to town about the end of next week."

We find that she wrote to him with her usual punctuality, and we may presume gave her very *diffident* advice how he might remove the "loathing he excited among his friends," and induce them to like him better, as they saw more of him. But his visitation was at least suspended for a little time by a disagreeable accident which befell his 'Minerva.' On the 14th of January she slipt down in Gerard Street, and dislocated her shoulder, which confined her a fortnight to the house, and she was attended by Mr. Cotter the surgeon. However, by taking proper care, she was quite recovered by the 27th February, "dressed herself

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without help, and having had the aid of Mrs. Shakespear, her landlord's sister, since the fall, she now with a present, and suitable acknowledgments, dispensed with her further attendance. We find it to have been her *left* shoulder that was dislocated, from the early exercise of her pen. On the 7th of February, for instance, she began to write upon the *virtues*, and perhaps more strictly merited Goldsmith's well-known compliment to Cumberland; and on the 15th she notices that she began to write her *life:* so that she was too modest to think the subjects identical. She also commenced the copying out of her novel on 'The Prejudice of Education;' and also her new comedy.

Dr. Gisborne appears to have called upon her about a week after her accident, and saw her basket of guineas standing within her reach, no doubt for the convenience of paying the surgeon who attended her: however, thinking that his fair monitress might suspect him (as Brutus did his brother Cassius) to have an "itching palm" incidental to gentlemen of his profession, he wrote the following reproof on the 30th, which shows their harmony to be quite restored.

"Clifford Street, January 30.

"Dr. Gisborne presents his compliments to Mrs. Inchbald, and if he had not been interdicted from calling upon her all this week, would have done himself that pleasure this morning, chiefly,

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he confesses, with an interested view, in the hope of obtaining an order or two.

"Dr. G. hopes that Mrs. Inchbald did not find her basket of guineas improperly diminished after his last visit; although he confesses he does not much approve of such exhibitions in such company; nor should he have approved of it better even if little Squib had been present."

The orders which he wished seem to have been sent, with further civilities, which he acknowledges with some collateral subauditions:—

"Monday Morning.

"It was not in jest that I talked of going to the play, nor do I *laugh*, but think myself much obliged to you for your kindness in letting me know the number of the box, as I desired: but as I only heard you *say* you would give me this information, and could not see your looks at the time, you may imagine that I was not too confident what would be the event; for I am so extremely often deceived by what people *say*, that the *smallest collateral* judgment concerning their intentions is, believe me, of the greatest use. Even the other morning I expected to receive a letter because a friend the day before had *said* that one should be sent me; but it never arrived."

But in March the poor Doctor is himself upon

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the sick list, and in truth even dangerously ill. She describes herself as perfectly "miserable" in consequence; makes her inquiries after him two or three times a day, till he is convalescent; and, by a letter from him, dated the 5th of April, it may be inferred that, accompanied by a friend, she paid him a visit of no very hostile aspect, at his house in Clifford Street.

"Clifford Street, Friday, April 5.

"Dr. Gisborne will be very glad to see Mrs. Inchbald and her friend on Monday morning soon after ten. To-day he is engaged with his lawyer about his income-tax, and perhaps to-morrow, and on Sunday he is to go out of town. His house, indeed, will be put to the blush, being filthy and dirty, and having wanted painting these seven years, and never yet, since he had it, having been asked to be looked at."

After this one might imagine he could neither feel nor pretend any *doubt* that the lady was at his service, if he chose to *take her;* but, *au contraire,* on the 14th of August he called upon her to take leave, upon going into the country, and out of England. On the 16th she sent him a present of a *reading-glass,* acknowledged by a letter which pleased her; and he wrote to her from Chester in the month of October. She saw little of Hardinge; but Mr. Rogers, the poet and banker, paid her many agreeable attentions. Mr. Holcroft too

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affected great jealousy of Dr. Gisborne, and gave himself the importance of being *angry*, and suddenly walking away.

To men of better temper. The introduction Mr. Lawrence the painter had obtained at the rout of Mrs. Siddons he did not allow to rest unimproved; and Mr. Godwin arranged a meeting for him with Mrs. Inchbald, and accompanied him to Leicester Square as an old friend. He was there some time, and she much admired him. This interview led to frequent calls; and one evening he staid to tea. At this time it was of importance that his gallery in Greek Street should exhibit the beginning of portraits, to which the eye might be attracted as the mirrors of either rank, or beauty, or genius; and Mrs. Inchbald undoubtedly combined two of the requisites, when in the month of July she frequently sat to him for her picture. To Sir Joshua Reynolds, Hoppner made the nearest approaches as to style, and had by much the greater portion of fashionable sitters. With no unfriendly mind, young Lawrence "confronted him with self comparisons;" and fairly put forward the pretensions of his own pencil, aided by the personal graces of fine features and polite manners, retiring rather than obtrusive, and at least gentle, if not accordant. From the very beginning he struck at the highest quarry, and his plan demanded ample premises, which in good situations are expensive to the rising artist. Mrs. Inchbald

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lived to see him at the unquestioned summit of the branch of art which he practised—the favourite of his royal master the late King, and the President of the Royal Academy.

In the month of May she received two letters to acquaint her with the death of her brother George Simpson; but there was no distinct information, and she probably thought it unlikely, as no report of illness had preceded. However, two months after, her active friend Bonnor confirmed the report, from unquestionable sources: he died in a duel at Hamburgh.

"Hamburgh, 27th June, 1795.

"I recollect the Mr. Simpson you inquire about perfectly well, and particularly the melancholy circumstance of his death, which happened in January last, in the inn to which you say his letters were directed. He lodged there with a Mr. Webber, with whom I believe he had lived some time in the greatest friendship; but an unfortunate quarrel took place between them, (arising, I know not from what cause,) which ended in a duel; and, unhappily, in it Mr. Simpson was shot dead almost upon the spot, or at any rate expired the same evening. Mr. Webber got off, and had saved himself some days, and at some distance from this, but was found out, arrested, and brought back here, where he was put in prison, and remains still, I believe, without any decision in his case."

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"No. 33, St. Swithin's Lane.

"MY DEAR MADAM,

"The above is abstracted from a letter to a friend of mine, who wrote for information on the subject. Ever yours,

"R. BONNOR."

He had not always met the just expectations of his sister; was by no means calculated for business, and frequently involved in his affairs, beyond the *measure* of her assistance. She well discriminated, even in her love, between a lavish bounty that injured the giver, without saving the receiver; and that moderated benevolence which added to the comforts at least of the unfortunate, and left the bestower in a condition to give *again*, to that subject, and to others.

In August too, her apparently beloved friend Mrs. Whitfield was dangerously ill, and frequently confined to her bed. Her disorder fluctuated, and Mrs. Inchbald was sometimes cheered with a notion that she would struggle through. She visited and passed some hours with her every day, or with very few intromissions, until the 19th of December, when she died. Mrs. Inchbald had intended to follow her remains; but her very attached maid-servant, dying on the very day of her mistress's funeral, the accidental concurrence quite overset her fortitude, and she became literally unable to discharge the mournful but last calls upon a protracted friendship.

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Mrs. Inchbald, though at times she hardly felt secured of it, really possessed a very distinguished place among the friends of Mrs. Dobson. That accomplished woman died on the 1st of October, and Mrs. Inchbald received a ring, to be worn in remembrance of her. This acquaintance, with the frequent use of her carriage, and the constant invitation to her table, when in the *mood*, she owed to her best friend Mrs. Phillips, to whom she was proud to owe still higher obligations, during a long life.

With the Kemble family this year she had frequent intercourse. They were playing the great worldly game, and strengthening themselves by splendid connexion; but still remembering early friends, whose talents and accomplishments could properly mix with persons of condition. Kemble, to be near the Abercorn family, had taken a house at Harrow Weald, and he took Mrs. Inchbald down there in September, in his chaise, to pass a few days with Mrs. Kemble. She easily saw in this prefatory visit the greater intended in the "All hail! hereafter!" and accordingly on Saturday the 14th of November she called on Mrs. Kemble, and went with her on a visit to the Marquis of Abercorn, at Stanmore, where Sir George Beaumont and Mr. Steele were also guests. She passed Sunday there, returning to town on Monday morning with Mrs. Kemble, dining with her in Caroline Street, and accompanying her to the

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theatre in the evening. Nor did Mrs. Siddons less demand her share of "The *Muse's*" time; frequently inviting her to dinner, independently of the Sundays usually passed with the Twisses, which commonly assembled the whole family. Sir Charles Bunbury also had the happiness of entertaining her, and in the month of June, with a party of *thirty*, carried her over Carlton House—an object of great importance to ladies, from the splendid taste of its illustrious owner. Among her distinguished visitors may be numbered Miss Wallis: she always called upon her in the carriage of the Lord Chancellor (Loughborough), who treated her with an almost paternal and truly amiable preference. But however pure and captivating such condescensions may be, they are still condescensions; the persons *patronised* by the great are never upon a level with them, and the proud independent mind of Mrs. Inchbald noticed something of the evils attendant upon such a state. Her record shall be given *literatim*: "May 21st, dined with Miss Wallis; two *upper women servants* there some time. Saw much of the sorrow of such connexions." To be sure; because, as in palaces, whatever be the functions or talents, all are as servants; and there is little discrimination among dependents.

The sorrow of some *other* connexions she would by no means permit herself to share. Lady Lanesborough sent her two invitations to

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dinner, and called upon her two or three times Her invitations were declined, and her ladyship denied admittance.

Her scarcely sane acquaintance, Mrs. Wells, called again upon her, with her very lovely children, and the Marquis of Abercorn did her the honour of returning her visit.

She has not recorded a single attendance at chapel, nor has she any allusion to the subject of religion; though few years in her existence should seem to have afforded more occasions for seeking its consolation. But the reader is not therefore to imagine her insensible on the subject. We shall at a proper time exhibit her yearly *thermometer*, as to the condition of her mind, to prove the censorial inspection she always made into her SELF.

Her regularity and economy were as striking this year as any former. Between the midsummers she saved £8. 14*s*. out of her permitted 34*s*. per week, though the dearness of coals had caused her to expend a guinea beyond the sum she allowed for fuel. Her savings were immediately given among her needy connexions.

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[APPENDIX.]

THE MASSACRE:

TAKEN FROM THE FRENCH.

A TRAGEDY OF THREE ACTS.

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PRELIMINARY.

THIS play was suppressed, though printed, before publication, in deference to political opinions, which we do not absolutely condemn. Now, however, as curiosity may expect to be gratified by the work of our Author, we see no reason for keeping it from the Appendix to the first volume.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE writer of the following pages, in laying them before the public, imagines that no further reason requires to be alleged for their not having first been produced at one of our theatres, than the reason assigned by Mr. Horace Walpole (now Lord Orford) in the postscript to his much-admired tragedy, 'The Mysterious Mother,' which was never intended for representation:—"From the time that I first undertook the foregoing scenes, I never flattered myself that they would be proper to appear on the stage. The subject is so horrid, that I thought it would shock, rather than give satisfaction, to an audience. Still, I found it so truly tragic in the essential springs of *terror* and *pity*, that I could not resist the impulse of adapting it to the scene, though it never could be practicable to produce it there."—*Postscript to 'The Mysterious Mother.'*

Having applied a paragraph of the noble author's above mentioned, to the present piece, the writer also avers, that the story of this play (as well as that of 'The Mysterious Mother') is founded upon circumstances which have been related as *facts*, and which the unhappy state of a neighbouring nation does but too powerfully give reason to credit.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

TRICASTIN.
EUSÈBE, TRICASTIN
GLANDEVE.
ROCHELLE.
CONRAD.
MENANCOURT
DUGAS.
GURET.
THEVENIN.
CLEVARD.
Domestic.
First Follower.
Second Follower.

WOMEN.

MADAME TRICASTIN.
AMÉDÉE.

Children, Attendants, Soldiers, &c.

SCENE—*A City in France, about sixty miles from the Capital.*

Time of representation, one day.

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THE

MASSACRE:

A TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Saloon in the house of* EUSÈBE TRICASTIN.

Enter MADAME TRICASTIN.

Mad. Tri. What misers are we all of our real pleasures! I condemn avarice; and yet, was gold half so precious to me as the society of my dear Eusèbe Tricastin, I should be most avaricious! Even now I grudge, to a degree of rancour, my nearest, dearest relations the pleasure of his company; and think the loss of him, for one day only, beyond the appointed time of his return, a robbery on my happiness not to be forgiven.

[*The door opens, and she goes hastily to meet the person entering; but, on perceiving it is* TRICASTIN *senior, she turns away with chagrin.*]

Tri. What, daughter, sorry to see me! This is the first time, since I have had the joy to use that name, that you have ever met me with coolness—nay, this is something more—'tis with repugnance.

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Mad. Tri. Nor ought you to be offended if it is; for I was vexed at seeing you, because I hoped, as the door opened, it was your son.

Tri. Ay, I imagined as much—uneasy, because he has exceeded his promise a few hours.

Mad. Tri. A few hours! half a day, and a whole night; he promised to be at home by noon yesterday.

Tri. And now pray tell me—is this the first promise he has ever broken with you?

Mad. Tri. The first, either as a lover or a husband.

Tri. He is then a more faithful lover and husband than ever his father was.

Mad. Tri. And you cannot be surprised, Sir, if I feel, on this occasion, such an alarm—such a despondency——

Tri. For shame!—you have nothing to apprehend. Consider, my dear, he is with your mother, your uncles, your brothers, nieces and nephews; and, as he does not go from this town to Paris above once in a year ——

Mad. Tri. It is still cruel of him to remain there without accounting to me for it—it is cruel of him to find delight in the society of his friends, while he knows what must be the inquietude of my mind at his stay.

Tri. Cruel! And now do you suppose that my son, and your husband—he, who loved you for five years before marriage, and has *adored* you for ten years since—do you suppose that he could be cruel to you?

Mad. Tri. I firmly suppose he could not; and, therefore, I suffer the greatest alarm lest some accident——

Tri. Here comes his friend, and yours: I met them, about two hours ago, taking a ride on the Paris road; and they told me they should go as far as the hill, in hopes to see his carriage at a distance, and be the first to bring the news to you.

Mad. Tri. Did they then know of my anxiety? I did not tell them.

Tri. Tell!—is there cause for *telling* when a woman of

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sensibility loves or hates? when she feels hopes or fears, joy or sorrow? No—the passions dwell upon her every feature—none but the female hypocrite need fly to the tongue to express them.

Enter CONRAD *and* AMÉDÉE.

Tri. Well, have you had the good fortune to meet my son?

[AMÉDÉE *throws herself on a couch, nearly fainting*—CONRAD *shows in his manner marks of confusion and concern.*]

Tri. What, have not you happened of him?

Mad. Tri. But they seem to have met with something—[*Going to* CONRAD.]—oh! do not distract me, but tell me what it is?

Con. Nothing—I hope, nothing.

Mad. Tri. Hope!—if you hope, then you also fear.

Tri. [*Going to her.*] Don't, my dear daughter, suffer yourself to be thus terrified. Do you think, if there was any cause to fear for your husband's safety, I should not be equally concerned with yourself? Why, I have known him longer than you have done, and (I could almost say) love him something better than even you do. *You* have other comforts; your youth, your beauty, and your many near relations: I can boast none of these—he is the only comfort I have on earth.

Mad. Tri. But, Sir, you have so much fortitude!

Tri. I grant you I showed fortitude when my wife died—most men are philosophers on such an occasion; but should any accident befall my son, you would see me weak as yourself.

Mad. Tri. [*Going to* AMÉDÉE.] Amédée, whatever makes you look thus pale, do not be afraid to tell it me.

Con. [*In a low voice to* TRICASTIN.] Permit me to speak a word to you alone.

Tri. Alone?—Why? Wherefore? [*Trembling.*] I pro-

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test you alarm me, almost as much as my daughter is alarmed!

Con. Follow me into another room. [*Still in a low voice.*]

Tri. But, if I do, her friend will tell her the secret.

Con. She has promised me she will not.

Tri. Don't mind her promise; she can't help it. However, I'll go with you. [*Going.*]

Mad. Tri. Sir! Conrad! Whither are you both going? Oh! whatever has befallen my husband, do not conceal it from me.

Con. I do not know that any thing has befallen him—upon my word of honour I speak the truth.

Mad. Tri. Then why these terrifying looks? Why——

Enter MENANCOURT *hastily.*

Men. Tricastin, is your son returned from Paris? all his friends are trembling for his safety, and have sent me to inquire.

Con. Then 'tis in vain to conceal any longer the fatal news that was told us, as we went on the road to meet him—the same accounts have now reached the town, and, I suppose, are made public. [MADAME TRICASTIN *throws herself on* AMÉDÉE'S *shoulder.*]

Tri. You distract me with suspense! Tell me the worst.

Men. Horrid disasters have fallen upon the capital—such—[*Faltering*] as I cannot repeat.

Con. Infernal massacre has been dealt to all our hapless party—bonds, vows, oaths, have been violated; nor even the prison-walls been a sanctuary for the ill-fated objects of suspicion. The report that's brought speaks of children torn from the breast of their mothers, husbands from the arms of their wives, and aged parents from their agonizing families.

Tri. [*Stifling his grief, and taking hold of his daughter.*] My child—we will still hope—that in pity to us all—in pity to the pangs which are else preparing for you and me

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— *he* has been spared.—Perhaps he had left the place before—who knows—[*Weeping.*] who knows, but we may see him again.

Mad. Tri. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, grant it Heaven! Grant that I may see him once again—and living. Though wounded, mangled, dying, yet once more, let me behold him living—Let me hang over his death-bed, and, while his sense is undisturbed, tell him how much I love him, and will continue to love his memory—how I will be a tender mother to his children—and all, all, that my poor heart swells to have him know!

Amé. [*Raising her.*] Oh, give place to hope—you will see him again.

Enter EUSÈBE TRICASTIN *pale, his hair dishevelled, and his looks disordered.*

Mad. Tri. I do. I do see him again. [*She rushes into his arms, and he embraces her repeatedly.*]

Eus. My wife! my wife! do I hold you in my arms! —My father! [*Throws himself on* TRICASTIN'S *neck.*] Oh, I did not think we should ever meet more!—My dear Amédée—my friends—[*Turning to them, then to his father again.*] Oh, my father, I thought of you, and of my wife, in the midst of all the dangers!

Tri. How have you escaped? I here devote my future days to that blest Providence, who, in protecting you, has rendered those days worth preserving.

Con. Relate, my friend, the particulars of what has passed.

Eus. [*Shrinking.*] Oh, that I could forget them all—banish the whole for ever from my memory!—That al who were spectators could do the same, and human nature never be scandalized by the report!—But that's impossible—nations remote will hear it, and states of savages enroll us "Fellow Citizens."

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Mad. Tri. Oh, Heaven! he is wounded—behold his clothes!—

Eus. No, I am not wounded—these stains came from the veins—of thy mother—thy uncles—thy sisters—and all of those, who clung fast round me, and I tried in vain to defend. [*Wildly.*]

Mad. Tri. Oh, horror!—yet, while *you* live to tell the tale, I will bear it.

Con. But how preserve yourself?

Eus. By miracle—I fought with the assassins, and fell amongst my brethren—at that moment my senses left me. —When they returned, and I put out my arms to embrace my fellow sufferers, I found I clasped nothing but dead bodies.—I rose from the horrid pile, and by a lamp discerned (all gashed with wounds) faces, that but a few hours before I had seen shine with health and benevolence.—Rushing from the ghastly scene, I fled, I knew not where, about the town—my sword in my hand, reeking with blood, my hair dishevelled, and my frantic features caused me to be taken for one of the murderers, and so I passed unmolested, once more to see the dearer part of my family.—But am I with them? really with them? My ideas are confused.—Poor helpless victims of ferocious vengeance, pale, convulsed with terror, and writhing under the ruffian's knife, pursue and surround me.—Am I, am I with my living family?

Mad. Tri. Thou art with me—and now the only relation I have on earth—for my sake, therefore, re-collect your scattered thoughts.

Eus. No, I still hear the shrieks of my expiring friends, mingled with the furious shouts of their triumphant foes. I saw poor females, youths, and helpless infants try to ward off the last fatal blow, then sink beneath it—I saw aged men dragged by their white hairs; a train of children following to prevent their fate, and only rush upon

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their own. I saw infants encouraged by the fury of their tutors, stab other infants sleeping in their cradles.*

Mad. Tri. Oh, Heavens !—

Eus. I crossed the Seine—its water blushed with blood, and bore upon its bosom disfigured bodies, still warm with life.—At the sight, single as I was, I would have attempted vengeance;—but you, my dear relations—the thought of leaving you behind, restrained the mad design.

Con. Revenge is not now too late.

Eus. [*Taking hold of his hand.*] And here let us swear——

Tri. Hold—vengeance is for Heaven—by pursuing retaliation, we shall assume the power of God, and forfeit the rights of man.

Mad. Tri. Rather let us fly the danger which threatens us; we know the tendency of the people even of this place—the infection of the metropolis still spreads—let us leave this city—nay, the land: nor breathe its air till the sweet breeze of peace restore its lost tranquillity.

Tri. My son, if your father's voice has any power; if you are not bewildered by the direful frenzy which has seized your enemies; if you have been preserved to me my child still to obey my commands, fly with your wife to a neighbouring nation, where (without coldly inquiring who is right or wrong) those in distress are sure to meet with succour.

Eus. How! fly from danger!

Tri. Imprudent courage has worse effects than cowardice. Would you risk the life of your wife?

Eus. That's dearer than my own.

* Shocking, even to incredibility, as these murders may appear, the truth of them has been asserted in many of our public prints during the late massacre at Paris; and the same extravagant wickedness is attested to have been acted at the massacre of St. Bartholomew, by almost every historian of that time. "*Des enfans de dix ans tuèrent des enfans au maillot.*"—*L'Esprit de la Ligue.*

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Tri. Fly with her then, and with your children instantly. I, with these friends, will take a different route and meet you at the appointed place.

Mad. Tri. [*Kneeling.*] My husband! Oh! if I kneel in vain to you, how can you hope my prayers will soften the murderer?

Eus. Murder!—your murderer!—protect me from the thought. I'll go with you to exile.

Con. Let us retire then, and consult the means of our departure.

Men. Eusèbe, I'll but return to my own house for a few moments, then join you here again. [*Exit.*

Eus. [*To his father.*] You shall go with me, Sir:—I cannot, will not part company with you. No, we will go together, and console each other even under the assassin's dagger.

Tri. The dagger has no terrors for me, unless 'tis pointed at your breast, my son. Call your domestics, and instantly give the necessary orders for your flight; and if, on consultation, we find it practicable, not *one* of us will separate from the other. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at* EUSÈBE TRICASTIN'S.

Enter TRICASTIN, EUSÈBE, *and* CONRAD, *in travelling dresses.*

Eus. Then, if it must be so—if it is discreet to separate—to your care, Conrad, my friend, I commit my father till we meet in England. Take every precaution possible

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for your safety, but let not your journeys be so rapid as to endanger his health. [*Whispering* CONRAD.] Consider he is not so young as you, and do not suffer him to be too active, whatever inclination he may show.

Tri. [*Cheerfully.*] My boy, farewell! You will go immediately from the other door of the house, with your wife and children; and till we meet again, my blessing go along with you—the blessing of an old man, who did not think to be an exile at these years. But, in whatever country, if I meet my child, I shall not call it banishment. Are you sure you have taken money and jewels sufficient to bear you all through your journey? Here, take this little casket more; your wife may be in want of many things upon the road which you are not aware of: and, as for Conrad here, and myself, I'll answer for it *we* shall want for nothing. [*Affecting cheerfulness.*]

Eus. Sir, I have more than enough already—paper money in abundance.

Tri. But, I have been thinking, paper is doubtful currency. However, if you have no occasion for this, take it for my sake—sure, at parting, Eusèbe, you cannot refuse to take a keepsake from me? [*He takes the casket.*]

Enter MADAME TRICASTIN *and* AMÉDÉE, *attendants following with small trunks, chests, &c.*

Eus. Ah! These chests will look suspicious: if it's suspected we mean to fly, we may be detained; or at least insulted. Let these be left for us at the next village.

Enter on the opposite side MENANCOURT *hastily.*

Men. Alas! Eusèbe Tricastin, you have saved yourself at Paris, only to fall a victim here!

Tri. [*Starting with horror.*] What do you say?

Men. The rage of the adverse party is not confined to the capital: some from thence are arrived in this city, and have increased that flame, which has long since been

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kindled amongst our populace. You, young Tricastin, are proscribed; a price is set upon your life; and now the rabble are at the gate of your avenue, to claim it.

Tri. I'll go to them.

Eus. [*Stopping him.*] You go!—for what?

Tri. To speak kindly to them—to let them know you have done them no harm, nor wished them any;—and it would be cruel to take an only child from an old man, who has no other comfort.

Mad. Tri. Why do we loiter?—Let us fly immediately by the other part of the house, as we had determined.

Men. Ah, Madam, were it possible to fly, you would not see me here. The gates of the town are closed—the soldiers have declared themselves against us—a battalion guard every passage—the garrison is under arms—do you not hear the beat of the drum? That, and the sound of that bell, are the signals for a general massacre.

Eus. Then let us arm ourselves instead of meanly flying—arm, arm, and sell our blood most dearly. But where shall I conceal my wife? how protect her from their unhallowed hands? for, when I am slain, who will then fight for thee? [*Throwing his arms around her.*]

Men. Give her an instrument of death to defend herself—our female enemies use them to our cost.

Eus. No, by Heaven! so sacred do I hold the delicacy of her sex, that could she with a breath lay all our enemies dead, I would not have her feminine virtues violated by the act. [*Turning to his father.*] More sorrow still!—Those relations, who were my dearest comfort, are now the source of all my affliction!—were it not for these, I would this moment rush amongst the enemy—but you, my father, weak by age, as she by nature, can I leave you behind?

Tri. [*Assuming a dignity.*] Eusèbe, had I strength, as at your age, I would disdain to arm myself against a banditti of cowardly assassins. Besides, ought we to take

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away another's life, unless we had a chance to save our own? Self-preservation has here no plea; we *can't* preserve ourselves.

Men. At present, they demand at this house only the life of your son; but, 'tis to be feared, when once they have forced the gate, and obtained that——

Eus. No, they would be satisfied—and they shall—with joy I go, a sacrifice for my friends. [*Going.*

Mad. Tri. Oh, stay, I conjure you!

Tri. My son, pity your father!

Mad. Tri. Why do you hold that poniard in your hand?—do you mean to turn it against yourself? Oh! give it me.

Eus. You know not what you ask for—tremble!—touch not that dagger without suffering an anguish through every fibre! It is an eternal monument of the blackest crimes! Some drops of precious blood, never to be effaced, have spotted the steel.

Mad. Tri. You thrill me with horror—What do you mean?

Eus. Dare you ask me? I snatched it warm and reeking from the breast of your expiring mother.—[*Wildly.*] I will replunge it into the hearts of those who have so well taught me how to use it.

Tri. Eusèbe, you who have obeyed me through your life, will you neglect my dying words?

Eus. Your dying words!

Tri. Most probably these are my last moments.—I can feel for the various passions which transport you, my child, to this excess of despair—but do not imitate your foes.—If it were left to your choice to be the murderer, or the victim, I am sure you would sooner perish than bear the name of homicide.

Amé. That providence which preserved you so wonderfully at Paris, may guard us here.

Tri. At least, let us not render ourselves unworthy of

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its protection—Let us fall with courage, but with resignation—and show, in dying, we have confidence there is another life. Join hands, my children, and join me in my humble appeal to Heaven. [*They all join hands but old* TRICASTIN, *who comes forward and kneels.*]

Tri. O thou, who art all-merciful, as well as all-wise and just! look down with compassion on this weak group, who have ever walked (to the best of their understandings) in the way of thy precepts. Oh! in this moment of their calamity, save them from perishing!—Disarm their enemies!—We *hope* in thee—We *bless* thee, whether under the sword of our assailants, or restored to peace and happiness.

Mad. Tri. [*Kneeling.*] O Heaven! preserve my husband, my children, and my father!

Eus. [*Kneeling.*] Heaven! save my wife, my father, my children, and these my friends.

Enter a DOMESTIC.

Dom. In vain have we endeavoured to guard the outward gate; the populace have forced it, and are now rushing into the house demanding my young master—Oh, sir, for mercy's sake, fly.

Tri. Son, you have just now addressed yourself to the throne of heaven; and it would be mockery so soon to offend against it. Retire then, at a father's command, nor show yourself to the people till they break to your inner apartments. I will speak to them here—I have done some charitable offices, in my time, to many of our citizens—I am not the object of their pursuit—therefore, permit me to expostulate just a few moments with them—a kind word has sometimes done, with most ferocious enemies, more than a thousand swords. [*Raising his voice with passion and firmness.*] Leave me to speak to them, I do command you.

Men. He advises well.

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Con. My friend, retire. [*To Eusèbe.*]

Mad. Tri. Oh! obey your father, and save his life and mine.

Con. Force, force him away.

[CONRAD *and* MENANCOURT *force him off, overcome by his various passions*—MADAME TRICASTIN, AMÉDÉE, *and the* DOMESTIC *follow, and leave only old* TRICASTIN *on the stage.*

Enter GURET, *followed by two or three leaders, such as himself, and a number of rabble, dressed like inferior tradesmen.*

Gur. Where is Eusèbe Tricastin? We want Tricastin.

Tri. I am he.

Gur. Are you Eusèbe Tricastin?

Tri. I am.

Gur. They told me he was young. Is this the man? [*To his followers.*]

Tri. I know not who, my friends, just at this time, would willingly put himself in the place of him you ask for.

Gur. That's true. [*To his followers.*] This is the man then?

1*st Fol.* He is like him, as well as I can remember;—yet he looks too old.

Tri. Care alters men much, good sir.

2*nd Fol.* [*Coming round* TRICASTIN, *and looking hard at him.*] This man must be too old for him. His hair is white.

Tri. Did you never hear of fright changing a young man's hair from brown to gray? and I must own [*affecting to tremble*] you have frightened me a good deal, gentlemen.

Gur. If you are Eusèbe, we are come to try, and to condemn you to death.

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Tri. Hush—silence—[*in a low voice.*] I have relations in the next room, whom it would grieve to hear you say so. Take me from this house, and then dispose of me as you think fit. Hush, hush—no noise—I go willingly with you.

Gur. Come along then—and, in the open hall in the market-place, you shall indulge the fury of the multitude. [*As they are leading him off, enter* EUSÈBE *on the other side.*]

Eus. Hold your profane hands—The fiend, who offers violence to my father—

Gur. This is then the son—seize him, my friends. [*They seize him.*

1*st Fol.* Yes, this is young Tricastin—I now perceive this is the man we came for.

Enter MADAME TRICASTIN, CONRAD, MENANCOURT, *and several attendants, on one side, and* DUGAS *on the other.*

Dug. My friends, I am come with fresh instructions—Secure not only the younger Tricastin, but his whole family; and take them to the appointed place. Don't give way to your vengeance here—but there, in the midst of all our fellow-citizens, the example will be more terrible. [*They are all seized.*] [*Exit* DUGAS.

Eus. Villains, let go that lady. [*Breaking from the persons who hold him.*]

Mad. Tri. No, be kind and take me with him to death.

Eus. [*To those who hold her.*] Permit me to speak a single word to this lady. [*Takes her aside.*] My life, by all the tenderness I have ever shown you, save yourself for your children's sake. What will become of them when their father is gone? You have a moment now—retire, and secrete yourself among your domestics—we may yet escape by our valour; but what will avail my security if you should fall a prey? Our cruellest enemy, the man who knows us all intimately (Dugas), is this moment gone

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forward, off his guard, and an imposition may pass. [*To the persons who had seized her.*] This female, gentlemen, is but an humble visitor at my house, let her retire in safety. Here's myself, my father, and my two friends, do not ask your clemency.

Dom. We'll bear the stranger in, sir, and see her safe to her own home. [*The rabble do not oppose, and the attendants lead* MADAME TRICASTIN *fainting, on their shoulders, to the back of the stage.*

Re-enter DUGAS.

Dug. Regard neither struggles nor supplications, but bring them all instantly away. [*Going before.*

Tri. [*Laying hold of his hand.*] Dugas, hesitate an instant, and consider once—once call to mind, before you drag me and my wretched family to immediate death, that you and I are fellow-creatures—we are countrymen—nay more, townsmen—and, till this unhappy period, have always lived like neighbours. Many little acts of friendship have passed between us—such, my neighbour, as ought not to be forgotten in an hour of tribulation like this. Oh! by the many times we have exchanged the friendly salutation of "good morrow," or the kind farewell of "good night"—the numerous times that, at the hospitable board, we have wished each other, in our cheerful glasses, "health and many a happy day!"—by all these little kindnesses, which have their weight, with minds susceptible, do not imbrue your hand in your neighbour's blood.

Dug. The neighbour who thinks differently from me, I am his enemy.

Tri. Lead on then—for, in that case, I rejoice you are not my friend.

[*Exit* DUGAS, *followed by* TRICASTIN, EUSÈBE, CONRAD, *and* MENANCOURT, *who are surrounded by the rabble.*—MADAME TRICASTIN *is taken off, by her attendants, on the opposite side, as by stealth.*

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ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter CLEVARD *and* THEVENIN.

The. Oh! Clevard, my heart is sinking within me. I met, this moment, leading to a mock trial, (where Glandeve, strong in the opposite party, sits as judge,) all the unhappy family of old Tricastin—this city cannot boast a more virtuous man—ungrateful people! to whom he has been a friend, a parent.—There's not an indigent man in this whole town that ever implored his help in vain; and I now behold those very villains, whom his late bounty fed, reviling him as he passes along.

Clev. But this he has strength of mind to bear, no doubt, with dignity?

The. Unless when he turns towards his son, who follows close behind—then I can see his countenance change, the tears gush to his eyes, and stream down his furrowed cheeks. At this the rabble triumph!

[*Several shouts are heard.*

Clev. They are coming this way; I 'll join them, and be a spectator of all that passes.

The. I would as soon be—a sufferer. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*A Hall, or large Chamber.*

GLANDEVE *sitting as President; a crowd of persons attending.*

Glan. You have done me honour, brother citizens, in

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selecting me for Judge on this occasion; and, I trust, all my decrees will do honour to the confidence you have placed.

[*A shout from the rabble without; after which, enter* DUGAS *and* GURET, *followed by* TRICASTIN, *and all those* (*except* MADAME TRICASTIN *and her attendants*) *who concluded the preceding Act.*]

Dug. President, here is a family whom I accuse of being traitors.

Glan. Put each, in his turn, to the bar.

Dug. This is Tricastin the elder. [*Putting him forward.*

Glan. [*After a pause.*] A few days ago, when I inquired, you told me, Dugas, you knew this man to be a peaceable citizen.

Dug. I have since changed my mind.

Glan. Then, what do you think, my friends, [*to the spectators,*] is it not better that we wait a few days longer before we put Tricastin on his trial? for in that time the witness may possibly change his mind again.

Dug. No, I am fixed.

Glan. And so am I, to wait.—Officers, take the prisoner into your custody; and on your duty protect him from all violence, till I and my friends here call for him to appear. [*He is taken to the other side of the hall.*

Dug. I thought, Glandeve, you were the sworn friend of Liberty?

Glan. And so I am—Liberty, I worship.—But, my friends, 'tis liberty to do good, not ill—liberty joined with peace and charity.

Dug. But, if you mean to protect the father, you surely cannot think to save the son? [*Placing him forward.*] Every one present knows the crimes of Eusèbe.

Glan. What are they?

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Dug. All know—he does not think with us.

Glan. And how long (answer me, some of my friends,) has it been a capital offence—*to think as you please?* If I am a friend to freedom, my first object is, freedom of *thought.*

Dug. Do you then dispute the voice of the people? 'Tis they, who relying on the wisdom of their leaders, demand the forfeit life of those who are pointed out.—Orders, received from persons authorised to give them, should be *implicitly* obeyed.

Glan. This reasoning accords with military rules, when an army is prepared to give an enemy battle—but, suppose there should be issued an order for such an army to turn against itself, and each man slay his brother soldier; I trust, I hope, they would all imagine some fatal frenzy had seized the commander-in-chief, and every one lay down his arms, rather than massacre his comrade.

Dug. But if there are amongst them culprits to punish——

Glan. Their trials should be conducted with all due form—a sedate dignity preside over the whole—the judge be studied in all points of law, and every supposed enemy expelled the jury. But here, a frantic whim directs the most momentous parts:—a judge is elected with no other qualification than being deemed the prisoners' adversary—the jury has the self-same recommendation.—Unthinking man! know you what you are doing? That rash, that ignorant tribunal which beheads your foe to-day, may hang *you* up to-morrow.

[*He rises and comes forward to* TRICASTIN *and his party.*]

My fellow-citizens! disperse your fears—I accepted the office of judge, not to condemn, but to preserve you; and these [*pointing to the persons attending in court*] are a chosen set of men, whom I convened for the purpose of defeating the blind fury of your enemies.

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Tri. Virtuous Glandeve! who, from a supposed adversary, art become a saviour! behold me and my son at your feet, acknowledging our admiration and our gratitude. [*They kneel.*]

Eus. I here dedicate to you the remainder of my life—mine, and my infant children's.

Dug. Glandeve, you are now, by your own confession, surrounded by men whom you have packed for your purpose: but I have friends without, treble their number; and when I give the word, so far from protecting these traitors, you 'll not be able to defend yourself.

Glan. Wicked man! I scorn your power.

Dug. [*Calling with a loud voice at the side of the scenes.*] Advance, my friends!—we are betrayed!—force in, and take your vengeance!

Eus. Barbarous villain! here end your crimes.

[*He draws his dagger, and runs swiftly to* DUGAS *to stab him;* GLANDEVE *flies to* DUGAS, *and screens him with his own person.*]

Glan. [*To* EUSEBE.] Vindictive man, hold!—Rather strike here! [*to his own breast,*] for I trust in heaven I am less unprepared to die than he.

Dug. [*Aside.*] Protected by him!

Eus. I blush at my mistaken zeal; and at your feet, noble Glandeve, resign that instrument of death which I had sworn never to part from.

Dug. And at this moment it might be of use to you; for, behold these soldiers, who are under my command.

[*A band of soldiers, with Colonel* ROCHELLE *at their head, instantly rush in.*]

Dug. [*To the Colonel.*] Well, Sir, you and your brave men have, I find, received my orders, and my signal for entering here. These are all your victims.

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Roch. Yes, Sir, my brave men have received your commands; and this is their brave reply:—"They are all men of courage—all ready to enter the field of battle against an insulting foe, and boldly kill him; but, amongst the whole battalion, we have not one hangman."[1]

Glan. They are *my* soldiers then, and no longer yours. [*to* DUGAS]—My generous men, [*to the soldiers*] fly through the town, and instantly protect all those of the persecuted party!

Roch. That we have done already, and have recovered dead corses of many from the ferocious mob. Here, close to the door of this hall, stretched on a bier, my soldiers bear a lovely matron butchered, with her two children by her side—we snatched her from the hands of her assassins before her beauteous body was disfigured: and lest they should regain it from our possession, I ordered the corpse (followed by her mournful attendants) to be surrounded by a party of our men, till we had leisure to deposit it in the family burial-place.

[*A bier is brought in, followed by several domestic attendants and some soldiers.—On the bier is laid the dead body of* MADAME TRICASTIN, *and two children dead, by her side.*]

EUSÈBE *stands like a statue of horror at the sight.—After the bier has been set down a little time, he goes to it.*

Eus. For what have I been preserved? Oh! night that I escaped through torrents of blood, at Paris—far,

[1] A well-known reply sent by a commander, to the orders he had received from Court at the massacre of St. Bartholomew. "Dans tout le militaire, il ne s'est trouvé que des hommes courageux, prêts à voler aux actions les plus périlleuses, mais pas un seul bourreau."

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far less horrible than this day to me! Father, behold your grand-children by their mother's side, and own your son was born for greater anguish than human nature can support!

Roch. [*Going slowly, respectfully, and timidly up to* EUSÈBE.] This distraction makes me not doubt but you are the unhappy father of these infants, and husband of this lady. I was so fortunate as to be some consolation to her in her last moments, and received her parting words. The crowd had entered and encompassed your house, and she had called repeatedly for assistance before I was able to make a passage to her through the multitude:—when I did, her desire to save her life had subsided; for she had beheld her two children slain. The eldest, to the last, she held fast by the hand—the youngest she pressed violently to her bosom, and, struggling to preserve, received the murderer's blow through its breast, to her own. "Tell Eusèbe (she cried as I came up) I die contented, with my children; and entreat him not to grieve at what he may think I suffered at my death; for my pain, except for him I leave behind, is trivial."

Eus. Dying saint! This was to calm my despair.

Tri. And suffer it to have its effects. I know and feel your loss, my son, and I feel my own. Oh! had she been but under this good man's shelter— [*to* GLANDEVE.]

Con. But when was joy superlative? Our unlooked-for release from death had been happiness supreme, but for this abatement.

Glan. My friends, I conjure you to take every care that the perpetrators of this barbarous outrage are secured. This man [*to* DUGAS] and his followers shall be made prisoners till our researches prove successful. — Then, the good (of all parties) will conspire to extirpate such monsters from the earth. It is not party principles which cause this devastation; 'tis want of sense—'tis guilt—for

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the first precept in our Christian laws is charity—the next obligation—to extend that charity EVEN TO OUR ENEMIES.

[*The bier is carried off in slow procession*—TRICASTIN *and* EUSÈBE *following as mourners, and the attendants singing a dirge.*]

END OF VOL. I.

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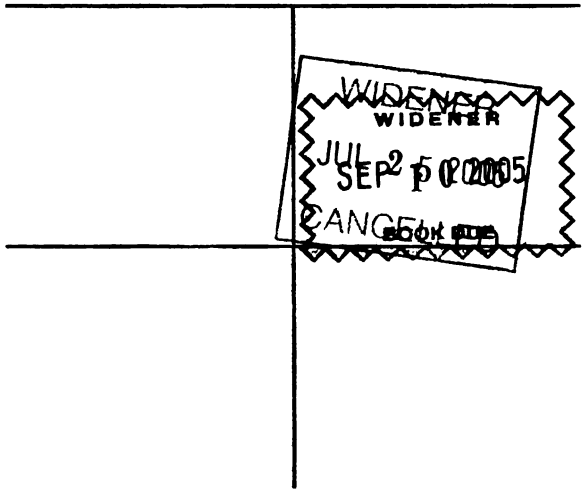

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